JUL 5 1945

PERIODICAL ROOM
GENERAL LIBRARY
UNIV. OF MICH.

THE NEW

# STATESMAN AND NATION

## The Week-end Review

Vol. XXIX. No. 746. [Incorporating THE ATHENÆUM] SATURDAY, JUNE 9, 1945 [Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper] SIXPENCE

CONTENTS


| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| COMMENTS | Page 365 | PETER GRIMES—I. By Desmond Shawe-Taylor | 371 |
| AT THE HUSTINGS | 367 | RADIO NOTES By Edward Sackville West | 371 |
| COAL AND PARTY POLITICS | 367 | MUSIC. By Lionel Cranfield | 372 |
| OUT OF THE SOVIET WINDOW | 368 | THE MOVIES. By William Whitebait | 372 |
| PARTANT POUR LA SYRIE. By Reginald Reynolds | 368 | PLAYS AND PICTURES | 372 |
| A LONDON DIARY. By Critic | 369 | CORRESPONDENCE | 373 |
| THIS ENGLAND | 369 | From Donald Alexander; Geoffrey Stephenson; Hugh Shearman; Wenzel Jaksch and others; G. G. Coulton; and others. | |
| A VOICE FROM BERLIN. By R. H. S. Crossman | 370 | BOOKS IN GENERAL. By V. S. Pritchett | Page 375 |
| WHERE TO PUT A FACTORY. By Kingsley Martin | 370 | REVIEWS: | |
| | | Original Sin. By John MacMurray | 375 |
| | | Luther and Niemöller. By Kingsley Martin | 375 |
| | | Family Photographs. By Harry Roberts | 376 |
| | | Sun Glasses. By Antony Brown | 377 |
| | | The Earthworm. By L. F. Easterbrook | 377 |
| | | Election Books | 378 |
| | | WEEK-END COMPETITIONS | 378 |


## LONDON, PARIS AND DAMASCUS

IT is the ill luck of the French and British peoples that the difficult issue of Syria should divide us while the future balance of internal power in both democracies is uncertain. Against a strong swing to the Left, General de Gaulle's chance of maintaining his ascendancy depends on his appeal to traditions which the Left are eager to discard. His primary aim is the recovery of a shattered memory of military prestige, as theirs is to build a happier society at home. He revives the old militarist claim for the Rhine frontier, and with it the demand for a privileged position in Syria, which is part of the same hereditary myth of grandeur.

It is important that we should remind ourselves how deeply rooted this tradition is in French history. It dates from the Crusades and it is closely knit with the Napoleonic legend. For centuries Catholic France exercised a right of protection over Syrian Christians, more especially in the Lebanon. We have come to think of the Suez Canal as our road to India and are apt to forget that it was French enterprise which dug it. Until we occupied Egypt, French influence and culture were paramount there. Though French power has been steadily retreating in the Levant since the conclusion of the *Entente Cordiale*, the Conservative half of the nation has fought a series of rearguard actions to arrest the process. The real origin of the present crisis dates from 1936, when the Senate refused to ratify the generous treaty Léon Blum had concluded with the Syrians, in which he recognised their independence and terminated the mandate. All the distrust which that act of imperialist self-assertion aroused was revived by General de Gaulle's military measures, first in the Lebanon, and then in Syria. There can have been no justification for the savage shelling of Damascus with its heavy toll of civilian and police casualties.

It is our misfortune that in both these cases we were compelled in the interests of military security to intervene on behalf of France's clients against her provisional Government. Our action was justified by the fact that we had under-written their new status of independence, and that the military control of the whole area of the Middle East was necessarily in our hands. What is not yet perfectly clear is whether it was necessary to publish to the world, as Mr. Eden did in the Commons, our peremptory "request" to de Gaulle to "cease fire." Unfortunately the simultaneous request to the Syrians for self-control was not published in Damascus. The result was that our "dictate," as the General calls it, dealt a heavy blow not merely to his prestige but also that of France. The Syrians inferred that they could count on British support for the complete elimination of French influence from this region. The spectacle of French troops under the guard of a superior British force has confirmed them in that belief. At the same time, British officials have taken over the control of the Wheat Board, on which the daily life of this population depends. The outcome of this incident cannot be the effective independence of the Arab States, as Arab spokesmen in Cairo seem to believe. For the reality of independence the Syrians lack the numbers and the economic development essential in the modern world. Nor, we believe, has it been British policy during the recent past to encourage a Syrian independence which would simply mean a transference of suzerainty from France to Britain. We presume that Mr. Churchill and Mr. Eden have been trying to persuade the French to handle Syria in a way which will enable them to maintain their privileged position in this area, without prejudice to Britain's stategic interests.

But in pursuing this aim, Britain is at a grave disadvantage. Frenchmen must view our Greek policy as an attempt to develop an exclusive sphere of influence, including the whole seaboard of the Eastern Mediterranean, and interpret recent events in Syria in the light of events in Athens and Trieste. Those who try to think objectively know very well that they are paying for General de Gaulle's touchiness and megalomania. But they also know that some of our former representatives in the Levant, notably General Spears, have worked to discredit France and to forward British imperial interests at her expense. Though as yet they use rather the language of regret than of anger, they are saying plainly in their press that we have consciously used our opportunity to supplant them. It may well be that given de Gaulle's conduct of the crisis we could not have acted otherwise last week. But it is essential that we should not be tempted by de Gaulle's stupidity, into an attempt to revive the policy of General Spears and to woo Arab support at the cost of a permanent estrangement with France.

There are two overwhelming reasons for this warning against the pro-Arab enthusiasts. In the first place the Arabs, however troublesome they may be when they present us with a police problem in Palestine, are a minor factor, if we are gravely measuring military assets. Here the romantics, who rely on Lawrence, have misled us. In the second place, if we are thinking of the welfare of this part of the world, the worst thing we can do is to foster the power and swell the ambitions of the feudal caste that now dominates these States. As a functionless landlord class it oppresses the peasantry and obstructs the development of which this immense region is capable. Irak has a population of about four million to-day: it led civilisation at the height of its greatness with thirty million: it could again feed this number with the aid of modern hydraulic engineering. The leading expert of the T.V.A. argues that in its turn Palestine could absorb five million further immigrants, if the Jordan were fully utilised. But there is no hope of such a development if in the name of strategy we back the present rulers of these ultra-conservative States and acquiesce in their obstructive nationalism. We have nothing at stake that compels us to pay such a price. If, as the French propose, the future of this whole region is to be submitted to a Conference of the Big Five, it ought to consider much more than the regulation of the Syrian crisis. If any of the world's leaders were big enough to see such a problem in terms of human welfare, we might end by shedding in the process of co-operation our fears of one another. It might even dawn on us that strategy, if we can work together in this spirit, will become a barbaric irrelevance.

### The Control Commission

It was emphasised in the preliminary publicity that the meeting of the four Generals in Berlin was strictly "exploratory." In view of the failure of the European Advisory Commission to achieve in 140 meetings any agreement, except on the surrender terms which were signed last Tuesday, this was a wise move. Montgomery and Eisenhower were at a considerable disadvantage since they had no notion what the policy of their respective governments was. Their agenda had to be confined to strictly military affairs such as exchange of prisoners and the timing of the complicated manœuvres necessary to get the four occupying armies each into its proper zone. At present, for instance, the Americans control areas which are destined for Britain, France and Russia, while French troops still exert squatters' rights in Stuttgart. Certainly none of the vital policy decisions could be expected till after the meeting of the Big Three. Meanwhile, these policy decisions are being unilaterally settled in advance by each of the occupying armies, and the map of the future Germany now published in Moscow suggests that tough bargaining rather than early agreement is in store for Europe. American reports of steps to create a separate Catholic Bavaria are not denied by S.H.A.E.F. Statements by usually well-informed sources that the Russians are already changing the gauge on German railways may also be true. Such an arbitrary dismemberment of Germany, with no regard to economics, will leave the British and Americans with a huge population on their hands, cut off from the areas in which their food is grown.

### San Francisco Deadlock

The deadlock at San Francisco is not generally understood. If anyone was hoping that this Conference would produce a constitutional improvement on the League of Nations and an instalment of world federation, they were living in a world of unreality. The best that could ever be hoped from San Francisco was a machinery by which the big Powers would meet regularly and discuss freely and frankly difficulties that might arise between them, while smaller Powers that would be vitally concerned in the discussions would be associated with them and have attention paid to their points of view and national interests. Whether this limited objective, which was clearly all that Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill originally envisaged, is carried out or not, depends not on the phraseology of the Charter, but on the will of the Powers to work together.

Just why Russia waited so long to insist on the whole of the original vetoing formula is not clear. It may be due to a deterioration in relations outside San Francisco. Russia may be reacting to doubt (now we hope being dissipated in Berlin) about our attitude to generals and industrialists in Germany, to wild talk in the American Navy Department, to American acquisition of naval bases in the Pacific, and to the still obscure incident in which Russia captured damaging proof of Allied intrigues in Bucharest. It seems more likely that the Soviet attitude to the veto is the result of the belated realisation that if it is unreal for the great Powers to vote each other into war, it is impolitic for them to vote each other into inquiries designed to stigmatise one of them as an aggressor. Any member of the new organisation can raise any issue which in its opinion might threaten peace. The Argentine, for instance, might attempt to organise a world crusade against Russia by declaring there was a dangerous dispute between Moscow and the Ukraine, now an independent republic with international status, or Mongolia or Persia. A Power much less suspicious than the Russians, with much less experience of international boycotts, might easily have taken the same point of view. Russia's delay in reaching this decision is strange, and the Soviet rule by which her delegates must constantly consult Moscow, troublesome. But it seems likely that some compromise will be found. It has always been true that the reality of any charter drawn up at San Francisco must depend on the world relations of the big Powers.

### Allies in Burma

Mr. Amery's friendly remarks about the Burmese people showed that he was sensitive to the criticism of the drafting of the White Paper. But they did not alter the fact that in the first stage, probably for three years, it is proposed that Burma should be administered directly by the Governor with whom there will be a small Council not subjected to the popular legislature. During that time anything might happen, and Sir Stafford Cripps was expressing the suspicions of the Burmese when he said: "We do not want to see Burma reconstituted under a British regime, entirely by British business men." Mr. Creech Jones made the same point, and Mr. Hynd and Mr. Sorensen both urged a different approach to Burma from that which is made either in the White Paper or the Blue Print. Just before the Debate *The Times* published two revealing articles from its Rangoon correspondent, showing the growth of a Nationalist movement which learnt from experience the fraud of "independence" under the Japanese. This Burmese Resistance Movement gave valuable assistance to the Allies through its National Army, claiming to be 10,000 strong. Like the Resistance Movements of occupied Europe, it has its own political expression in an Anti-Fascist Organisation which has drawn up a programme advocating district township and village representative committees to cooperate with the Civil Affairs officers; a peasants' union to increase agricultural production; unification of racial groups and national unity. The pattern of Resistance is broadly the same in liberated Asia as in liberated Europe. We can only hope that the pattern of British behaviour will not be the same. "What we have, we hold"—Mr. Churchill's disastrous slogan will, we hope, be forgotten after the election. *The Times* correspondent rightly says that "politics" in Burma cannot wait for years—or even until after the monsoons. "If mistakes are made now it may be impossible to retrieve them later. The British are presented with a wonderful opportunity in Burma, but it will not last indefinitely."

### Will Canada Swing Right?

If the landslide victory of the Progressive-Conservatives in the Ontario provincial elections is repeated in next Monday's Federal contest, the Tories have only to win a comparatively small number of seats in the other provinces to be returned as the largest party. Ontario and Quebec together return nearly two-thirds of the legislature, and, in the latter province, the divisions of the Liberals, plus the enormous growth of the chauvinist French Catholic *Bloc Populaire*, may well result in the defeat of almost all the Liberal and C.C.F. candidates. Although the C.C.F. may make gains in some farming and industrial constituencies, it is highly improbable that it will be strong enough even to look like the real opposition party. During the last six months its prospects have slumped very considerably—in Ontario the reversal of its fortunes has been catastrophic—since the Tories have forced the dramatic but diversionary issue of conscription before the electorate. Instead of any serious debate about the economic future of Canada, the country has been torn by dissension over the Liberal Government's reinforcement policy and by the racial dispute in French Canada. Now, it would seem, after long years in the wilderness, the Conservative Party is about to make a come-back. But even if it inflicts a crushing defeat on the Liberals and the C.C.F., its success may not be more than temporary. The C.C.F., like all young radical movements, has its growing pains. In the near future, when its organisation is consolidated, it will be in a position to make a real bid for power.

### The Freedom of Capital

The relaxation of the restrictions on capital issues announced last week is a long step back towards "business as usual" and towards the restoration of the old ways of financing industry. Taken in connection with the truncation of the Location Bill, which now becomes in effect a Special Areas Bill pure and simple, it amounts to a Government rejection of all real planning. True, control over capital issues is only modified, and not given up; but the list of types of enterprise that are to be set free is so wide that we may expect it in practice to extend over almost the whole field. Moreover, though bonus issues of shares are still very rightly prohibited (for who can forget the abuses in connection with them after the last war?), conversion operations are now to be allowed freely and the power to give or refuse leave to deal in new shares is now handed back absolutely to the Stock Exchange. In future, the State will have no say in the form which new issues are to take or even in their timing, except that the Bank of England will keep control over the timing of issues exceeding £100,000. Unit trusts remain for the present under the wartime ban, and issues for financing hire purchase and, with exceptions, the amalgamation of existing businesses, are also ruled out. High priority is given to capital for export production. The criticism to be made is not so much of the relaxations in themselves as of the absence of any constructive policy to accompany them. No one wants restriction for restriction's sake: what is needed is a positive plan for directing capital into the types of enterprise in which it is most needed to further a balanced policy of high production and full, well-distributed employment.

## PARLIAMENT: Last Legs

*Wednesday night.*

The old lady is passing rapidly away. Question-time continues to be heated and hilarious; but most debates have lost all life and sense of reality. On Tuesday the Tories argued a few technical amendments to the Local Government (Boundary Commission) Bill; and a measure permitting the use of public open spaces for temporary housing was agreed to as a "regrettable necessity." Late in the evening there was a brisk little debate in which Driberg and Aneurin Bevan tried vainly to protect the ordinary but possibly eccentric parson from arbitrary eviction by his bishop.

Wednesday's debate on the Government's reduction in the number of supply days did not raise the expected storm, mainly because the Labour Party, being uncertain of a full-strength attendance, had decided against dividing. Neither supply problems as such, nor the constitutional issue involved in the motion, bulked largely in the debate, which was another occasion of "squalid bickering" about the responsibility for the snap election. The most effective speeches, on the Conservative and Labour sides respectively, were those of Henry Strauss and Herbert Morrison. Bracken evaded the latter's arguments of substance, and indulged in crude clowning—his rudest and most pointed gibe being at the venerable Sir Percy Harris, whose indignant oratory he described as that of "a sheep run amok."

On Tuesday and Wednesday, at question time, each in turn of the previous nights' broadcasters got a loud cheer from his supporters as he came in. There were many questions about leave and repatriation problems, on which Grigg promised a comprehensive statement for this Friday. There was uproarious laughter when Murray, a solid, homely Scot, complained passionately about the case of a woman with "twins, four bottles, and only one teat"; Lyttelton gave bland assurances that rubber for teats was being released. The Prime Minister, asked why information about reparations and zones of influence could not be published, replied: "Because I do not think it would be a good thing."

Answering a question about the distribution of tomatoes, the Minister of Food was also asked, anxiously, by Bartlett about the distribution of over-ripe tomatoes in the next four weeks.

PONTIFEX MINOR

# AT THE HUSTINGS

Two years ago, when no party claimed the word "national" as a monopoly, Mr. Churchill went to the microphone and discussed in sensible terms the reconstruction problems that would face us after the war in Europe had been won. In the Four Year Plan which he then outlined it was possible to discover many points of detail and emphasis upon which party controversy would hinge. But with his central thesis that a considerable measure of State control was essential if we were to avoid a repetition of the chaotic aftermath of 1918, no reasonable person would disagree. At that time Mr. Churchill did not pose as the champion of Gladstonian Liberalism against the menace of autocratic socialism; on the contrary, he argued that the problem which confronts this country is how best to reconcile our traditional freedoms with the State direction of finance and industry which the age requires.

Had Mr. Churchill decided to continue on this middle-course, the election campaign would have been unexciting—and his chances of a majority good. There would have been an honest and legitimate debate between the parties about the extent to which State control is necessary to secure full employment, to build millions of new houses and provide adequate health and other social services. For it is not merely the Labour Party which considers that uncontrolled private enterprise is totally unable to rebuild Britain. Most Liberals and many Conservatives —among them prominent industrialists—are ready to accept and often to welcome increasing State direction in the public interest. By seeking to represent the best in our three parties Mr. Churchill would have added to his reputation and probably won the election.

But fate—and Lord Beaverbrook—decided otherwise. Mr. Churchill's strident rejection of every principle vital to any serious reconstruction programme has aroused the Labour movement and given Mr. Attlee an opportunity of reply that he used with dignity and effect. It has already had wide repercussions. The least thinking wireless listener must have noticed the contrast between Mr. Attlee's fair-minded statement and Mr. Churchill's crudity, and wondered how the Premier came to attack the Opposition for deserting the Government when he had himself said that it would be "wrong" to postpone an election after the defeat of Germany.

What is the reason for the Prime Minister's extraordinary somersault into vulgarity? Partly, no doubt, a simple fear of losing the election. It is easy to be statesmanlike, when your parliamentary majority is secure. It is terribly easy to be scared into rabble-rousing slogans when you face an election. Mr. Churchill has been scared into scare-mongering.

But there is a deeper reason than that. The backers of the Tory Party were faced with a real dilemma. Either there was to be a real attempt, by forgoing the immediate possibility of quick profits, to secure full employment, to plan our town and country pattern, to overhaul our tiring and ageing economic system, or there was to be a get-rich-quick scramble. Mr. Churchill has cast his vote for the post-war profiteers.

This choice is the final result of an internal struggle that has been going on within the Conservative Party for many months. In the end, it is the evil genius of Lord Beaverbrook and Mr. Bracken which has triumphed. The moderates, who have shown some signs that they understood what is happening around them, have been made to toe the line. Mr. Churchill is hardly in a position to talk of others putting party before country. He has abandoned his position as a national leader and become the spokesman of a small unscrupulous group in his own party.

If he manages to obtain a majority for the Tories on the platform he has now adopted, the consequences will be disastrous, in foreign as well as domestic affairs. It will mean an end to any hopes of international co-operation for the reconstruction of Europe. Europe cannot do otherwise than turn more and more to Socialism in seeking a solution of its economic difficulties. How, after last Monday's tirade, can the peoples of Europe expect any real assistance or friendship from a Britain with Mr. Churchill as Prime Minister? They will look on any act of his Tory government as an imperialist move dictated by sordid commercial and strategic motives. In Russia too, and in the Labour Dominions, the crude abuse of loyal Socialist colleagues will confirm latent suspicions. Protests have already come from Australia where Labour is in power and where there is no "Gestapo." Only in the most reactionary circles in the United States will this fantastic assault on all forms of social democracy find sympathy.

When Mr. Churchill imitates the soapbox anti-socialist of fifty years ago, he may say that he is defending Mr. Gladstone's England. But in reality, he is making it clear that those in Europe and throughout the world who look to England to find a middle way between the extremes of Capitalism and Communism, must now pin their hopes on the opposition parties.

# COAL AND PARTY POLITICS

It is difficult to conceive of a more disastrous beginning to the career of the Caretaker Government than when it first met Parliament with its future policy for coal. Disastrous, not necessarily to itself, but to the future economic and social life of the country, and in some degree to that of Europe, too. The policy put forward cannot fail to lead to the smallest possible output at the highest possible price; to cold houses next winter all over Britain, and perhaps the winter after that, too; to our impotence to contribute to the relief and rehabilitation of coal-starved Europe; to the loss of our coal export trade, and to the handicapping of our other export trades.

This is the best that can be hoped for from the reckless policy of doctrinaire private enterprise put over on the Prime Minister by the Beaverbrooks, Asshetons and the other counsellors of the Conservative Central Office school. The worst which must be feared, and even expected, is that, in the embittered state of feeling that will exist all over the country should the Caretakers win the election on a minority vote, there will be a national strike of mine workers in protest at the futility and frustration of the policy proposed, with all that might follow from such a strike.

What the Caretakers propose is to appoint a Central Authority with the twofold duty of encouraging amalgamations and of scrutinising the plans of reorganisation—presumably prepared by the men responsible for the industry's present state—from the point of view of the national interest. This is even less than the experts of the Reid Committee felt obliged to recommend to give their technical proposals a chance of success. They made it clear that their proposals "could not be carried out with the industry organised as it is to-day." Yet no alteration whatever is proposed in the organisation of the industry any more than it was when the Coal Mines Reorganisation Commission was appointed in 1930, or the Coal Commission in 1938. In the view of the Reid Committee the alteration required in organisation consisted first, in immediate and compulsory amalgamations, and, secondly, in powers to force the amalgamations once formed to carry out the technical reforms put forward. But this is not what is now proposed. Instead, voluntary amalgamations are to be encouraged once again, as they have been fruitlessly encouraged ever since Lord Samuel reported in 1925; and thus, at a time when, in the final words of the Reid Report, "there is no time to be lost," we are to wait until voluntary efforts have once more failed.

But even if the recommendations of the experts had been accepted, both in the letter and in the spirit, they would merely have provided sadly inadequate means to the end they had in mind. How, for example, can compulsory amalgamations be obtained? There is really only one way to do it, and that is by compulsory purchase (which must mean by the State) of each undertaking to be amalgamated, and its reconstitution under a company formed for the purpose. It would be grossly unfair, for example, to amalgamate a number of companies in varying stages of bankruptcy and prosperity, so as to give the former shareholders of all these companies some claim upon reserves built up by the prosperous. New companies would necessarily be formed upon whose boards of directors all interests would expect representation. No arbitrator could in practice settle such matters as these. Government responsibility would be inevitable. But if the Government were responsible, why should they not appoint the directors they thought fit? Why not control these new companies? Why not, in short, having compulsorily purchased the individual companies retain the whole under public ownership? That would be more reasonable than to return control to the shareholders of those very companies which have brought the industry to its present condition.

Supposing, however, that even this difficulty could be overcome. How would these new amalgamations trade? Would they compete? The answer is No. The coal industry is not prepared to go back to competition in any circumstances. It is certain that the amalgamations would combine to form that tighter selling monopoly foreshadowed in the Foot proposals. In any event, free competition between the more productive districts and the backward areas most in need of reorganisation would mean the virtual extinction of the latter, thus losing valuable coal reserves and creating great social problems. The only policy for them is to be treated as p of a unified industry, what time the State is effecting a fundamental reorganisation of their methods of production. In any case, competition, even if attempted, would be quite unreal. The recent White Paper on the Finances of the Coal Industry showed that every district in the country is either being subsidised, or is subsidising others. Nor is there any expectation that this state of affairs can be changed within the foreseeable future because of big variations in natural conditions in different districts combined with the National Minimum Wage Agreement. Competition and private enterprise on the basis of subsidising trade rivals simply does not make sense. The only conclusion is that there will be no competition, and at this point we are back with Mr. Foot's plan for a gigantic cartel of the whole industry, each company subsidising or being subsidised by another, and all actuated by the loftiest principles of National Service!

Yet another nail in the coffin of this reckless proposal is provided by finance. First, if the Central Authority were to exercise control in the national interest it would obviously conflict on occasion with the company's interest. This would lead either to a deadlock or else to the sacrifice of the shareholders' interests, and in the latter event claims would have to be made upon the Authority for financial compensation which it would be difficult to refuse, and still more difficult to accept. There must, therefore, be identity of interest between those running the industry and those providing the money. A second financial point is that no responsible company is likely to start major technical reforms unless the Government would provide the money, or unless there were an assurance that the expenditure would be specifically covered by compensation payments in the event of later nationalisation or unless there

were an expectation that a Tory Government would remain indefinitely in power. An assurance of that kind could not be given by the Labour Party, while an expectation of indefinite Tory Government would be manifestly unreasonable. The Government will, therefore, have to provide the major part of the money required, and if it does it ought to be in a position fully to control expenditure along constructive lines, and not be limited to the purely supervisory control of the Central Authority.

Finally, there is the question of the co-operation of the miners. The present Minister has laid repeated emphasis on the importance of this, and the Reid Report states that the problem of securing full co-operation is "the most difficult that the industry has to face." It adds that unless it is secured "the value of our technical recommendations will be greatly reduced." In these proposals of the Government the need for this fundamental feature of the reorganisation of the industry has been completely ignored. They expect, presumably, as many of the coal owners openly expect, a showdown with a repetition of the appalling industrial battles of 1921 and 1926 as soon as the existing Wage Agreement expires.

If there has ever been any impression that the Tories were intending to turn over a new leaf, to abandon their dogged protection of vested property interests in favour of policies designed to promote the efficiency, wealth and the welfare of the country as a whole—such illusions must be herewith shattered at one blow. Policy for the coal industry may be regarded as a test case. Here is an industry whose inefficient and reactionary condition has just been devastatingly exposed, and which has been the subject of continuous public concern for nearly thirty years. Almost every conceivable form of dual control has been proposed, and tried out, during these years, each time with negligible and in most cases, even negative results. The inability of the coal industry to meet the wartime—and even less the immediate post-war—demands placed upon it has brought the matter to a head. The whole country is looking for a "new deal" in the coal industry. And what do they get? A hashed-up version of the 1930 Coal Mines Act which proved a total failure.

## OUT OF THE SOVIET WINDOW

(Cabled by our Moscow Correspondent)

PERHAPS it would be a very good thing if before long there were another Big Three Conference. To-day, little more than a fortnight after the end of the German war, one hasn't the feeling either here or probably anywhere else that we have settled down to that "period of peaceful development" of which Stalin spoke in his victory day address. It is terribly important to get a lot of things straight. The Soviet Press is devoting much space nowadays to foreign affairs, and the tone is almost invariably highly polemical and truculent. One day it is about Sweden, another day about the *Economist*, then about the *Observer* or *Yorkshire Post*. And every day there is something about the London Poles. The more reactionary among these are suspected and even formally accused of wishing to provoke war between the Soviet Union and the Anglo-Saxon world. Similarly, Flensburg received enormous and very angry publicity. Now the incredible Flensburg "Government" has been dissolved, and there has been great relief over this. But many Russians wonder why the Flensburg episode should have happened at all. Dark suspicions have been aroused over the ultimate intentions of Nazi survivors and those "barons and bankers" who in Stalin's word were the real power behind Hitler's throne, and over the London Poles, especially since wide publicity has been given here to Cummings's article in the *News Chronicle* and the reports that Sosnkowski, Anders and other anti-Bolshevik generals are preparing to take their army of three hundred thousand into Germany, ostensibly as an occupation force. In an extraordinarily large number of places the Russians to-day are seeing plots being hatched and provocations being uttered and planned. It must be said that all this has come as an astonishment to many not very politically minded Russians who have just been hoping to see life become more pleasant and easy, and the Soviet Union settling down to long years of reconstruction and prosperity. Instead there is a feeling of uneasiness; some Swedish papers are upbraided for continuing the work of the late unlamented Goebbels, and publishing slanderous articles about the Red Army's "forty-eight hours looting at Budapest," while others are declared to be suffering from acute disappointment because the war hasn't turned out the way they wanted. Some of these others wanted either German victory, or they wanted Anglo-Saxon peace—with a weak and impotent Russia. Now the Red Army is in Berlin, and they don't like it!

There is a lot of talk about survivors of the Nazi wreck being very cheerful and saying their day will soon come and Germany will temporarily reassume her role of providing warring nations with armies of mercenaries, who will do the dirty work. So you now have Russians wondering whether there aren't people in Britain and America willing to play about with such ideas. The fact that many Nazi chiefs have been committing suicide when falling into Allied hands should be a fairly good demonstration that nobody of any consequence is playing ball with the Nazi chiefs. But that doesn't explain everything away. The *Izvestia* correspondent in San Francisco referred the other day to the rumours current there about the radical change coming in British foreign policy, meaning departure from the wartime alignment and from the "Yalta principles" and a "transitional" return to balance of power politics. Much more in this vein is said and alluded to in the case of Britain than in the case of the United States. For it is Britain which "set up" the Flensburg government and not General Eisenhower, and Britain was responsible for Munich. And where that is concerned, the Russians have distressingly long memories. What Munich means to them first and foremost is not the betrayal of Czechoslovakia or the collapse of the French system of alliances, but exclusion of Russia from Europe and a free hand for Germany in the East. America is somewhat different. It didn't have a Chamberlain. It has got Hearst, but that isn't quite so important, and the same *Izvestia* correspondent wrote an article the other day, saying that he is being advised by Americans all over the place not to read the American Press, because it is irresponsible and is not "representative". Which, one must say, is rather a tough generalisation.

Grievances against Britain go much deeper. The Russians are scenting the danger of Chamberlainism or some new variety thereof suddenly emerging. The Russians have not said much about Trieste, but they do not like the way Tito has been treated by Alexander. They didn't like Nenni being arrested. They criticise the British press for suggesting that real democracy is only that which is modelled on British democracy.

Above all there is the big question of Poland. The Russians are convinced that anyone associated with the London Polish Government, whom the British would sponsor, would not be much use in Poland, and might actually turn out a wrecker. A wrecker of what? Obviously—of the present set-up in Poland, and above all of the Slav idea. For on this Slav question the Russians hold very strong views now. They are determined there shall be no interference with the unity of the Slav nations: Slavs of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia. They want Poland to have strategic and "historic" frontiers along the Oder and Neisse. Also, they don't want any political disturbance and party strife inside Poland. There is some as it is. There was recently a hold-up at the State Bank at Lublin, and an armed gang carried off 30,000,000 *zloty*. Some supporters of the Warsaw Government have been murdered, as well as about one hundred Red Army men. In March alone 150 Jews, including children, were massacred. But this, it is declared by the Warsaw Government, is not really typical: much more typical of present-day Poland is the revival of industry and transport, and the more or less rapid return to normal living conditions. Russia is helping. Thanks to Russian raw materials, Lodz cotton mills are already employing 75,000 workers. The coal mines are going strong. The Swedes want to buy Polish coal. There is no serious food shortage. The idea is that Poland never had democracy according to the British pattern, and once she becomes prosperous she will be quite a happy place to live in. Why not give them a chance? Leave them alone. Time is on the side of the Warsaw Government.

Stalin's toast to the Russian people was significant. The Russian people are now seen not only as the leading nation among the nations of the Soviet Union but also, on a different plane, of the Slav peoples. At the same Kremlin celebration given in honour of Russia's great victorious generals, among them those "who liberated the Slav countries," Molotov stressed the importance of Slav unity. The emphasis on the continued importance of the Red Army is very strong. There is no suggestion, if you read the military press, of any sitting back and relaxing. On the contrary, there is the stress that now that the period of fighting is over the period of intensive training has begun. It means among other things "hands off the Slav world." Maybe it means chiefly that. Despite all this one has the strongest impression that the Russian people are extremely anxious to maintain friendly relations with Britain and America. The spontaneous enthusiasm for the Allies on Victory Day in Moscow was a good indication of this. But it is a complicated situation. Europe is full of revolutionary ferment. On the other hand, Fascist influences are not dead—far from it. It would be useful to get together and get a lot of things cleared up.

Since writing this, much of the excitement has cooled down. I think that people realise more than before that it will take some time for things to settle down in Europe. In the last few days emphasis is being continuously put in the Soviet press on the necessity for the closest collaboration with Britain and America, and some articles in the American press other than hostile articles have been quoted, notably Mrs. Roosevelt's. It is being impressed upon the Russian public now that big and influential bodies of opinion are in favour of collaborating with Russia. It is also pointed out that in the British election all parties (though not everybody "sincerely") are supporting the policy of co-operation with the Soviet Union. But vigilance remains the watchword.

## PARTANT POUR LA SYRIE

Saul
After all
Turned into Paul
On the road to Damascus.
The General might ask us
Why shouldn't de Gaulle
Play a similar role?

But I've heard
Something occurred
To jostle
The Apostle;
And *partant pour la Syrie*
Is merely *hari-kiri*
If you have any aversion
To violent methods of conversion.

The answer of Whitehall
Was not diplomatic at all;
But then, if you study the facts,
Epistles have always *followed* Acts.

REGINALD REYNOLDS

# A LONDON DIARY

LAST week I prophesied a Red scare or a Post Office Savings ramp during the election. I had not expected them so quickly. Mr. Churchill came out with both in his first broadcast—a very good sign, as an expert in the analysis of propaganda explains in our correspondence columns. The timing is surely wrong. The Opposition has a month to reply to Churchill's tarradiddle. But the Beaverbrook press has also given us a strong hint of another stunt in store for us. It is proposed that Mr. Churchill should go abroad on a Big Three mission, and broadcast back to the electorate pleading for support on the ground that he alone can finish the job in harmony with America and Russia.

* * *

I am sure there must be people who liked Churchill's broadcast; I just don't happen to have met them. Civil servants, middle-class Liberals and men-in-the-street have expressed to me something like real grief. They had not believed the prophecy that this was to be a Beaverbrook-Bracken election; they thought their hero a bigger man than he now wants to be. Instead of the high, above-the-battle tone, he has descended to the level of the old swash-buckling Winston who always made mistakes in judgment when it came to all-in fighting. The only voice I have heard on the other side came from a smart-Alec newspaper man who thought that this kind of lose-your-savings, Red scare was not too stale to be put over once again. "The public I write for," he said, "is so dumb it will fall for anything." But are working men really so dumb? One worker's comment was: "Nest-eggs? I've buried my little million pounds in a hole in the garden underneath the air-raid shelter."

* * *

Immediately after Attlee's talk, a friend who is not personally involved in the political battle, rang me up to say she felt rather sorry for Mr. Churchill: he must be feeling so cheap. He had sounded to her vulgar and like an old man who had got into a rut, using stunt words that had lost their meaning. By contrast Attlee sounded sane, practical and able to face the needs of our day realistically. The Leader of the Labour Party, perhaps because of Churchill's jibes, was much more forcible than in his previous broadcasts.

* * *

A recent letter comes from a friend in Hamburg who tells me how glad he is to be able to help the fine *alte Konzentrationaere* who had spent up to a dozen years in Dachau and Sachsenhausen.

> They are wonderful to talk to, like a different people from the other Germans who are *Ohne charackter*—like sheep. But these men and women have got character. Iron men, but also gentle and kind with a sense of humour—and after all they've been through. The *Konzentrationaere* are the people who can redeem Germany.

My friend went along with some of them to get their ration cards at the local Town Hall.

> I tell the officials that they must get billets, food and money for these men from the *Konzentlagers SOFORT!* The officials crawl. The *Konzentrationaere* are polite but firm. They fill in the forms. They understand the *Papier-Krieg*. The bureaucrat looks over his spectacles and asks, "Are more coming?" One says, "*Es kommen noch ein paar Millionen!*" The other civilians are amazed.

Later, during a VE-night celebration, a call comes through to round up some S.S. who have shot some Allied troops in a wood. The Germans ask if they can go along to help. When the party arrived, the S.S. had got away but the Germans cross-examine an old farmer who sheltered them.

> He begins to tremble all over. He is an old Nazi. He lies repeatedly. He has no character, no ideal. It is a joy to hear the *Konzentrationaere* talk to him. In the end we turn him over to the German police who, in this area are old anti-Fascists and wear red arm bands. I talk with one who was an old Social-Democrat. He wasn't like the chief of the police barracks in Altona who asked us not to bring the Jews back and made uncomplimentary remarks about the Russians. I listened patiently while he told me that they would smash any attempt of the Communists to raise their heads: then told him the Jews and Russians were our allies and that I would report his remarks to higher authority.

Lastly, he tells of a Communist who had been imprisoned since 1933 who said, "Out eight days, and I am not yet able to do political work. It's worse than being behind barbed wire."

* * *

I can appreciate the anguish of mind in which the appeal printed in our correspondence columns by Wenzel Jaksch and his colleagues was composed. The Sudeten German Social-Democrats were the last German Opposition Party which dared fight an election against the Nazis. That was in May and June 1938. They allied themselves openly with Benes and against Henlein, and they went down fighting. Now, under the new policy of indiscriminate expulsion, pro-Nazi and anti-Nazi pay the same price for being a Teuton in a Slav country. The fact is that Jaksch was in an intolerable dilemma. Too honest even to disguise his pride of *Germanism*, Jaksch throughout the war has stood for the principle of full minority rights within a multi-national state. But after what has happened under the German terror, it is quite unrealistic to expect that even such moderates as Dr. Benes will permit a large German minority to inhabitate frontier areas of Czechoslovakia, adjacent to Germany, and remain Germans with their own language and schools. Before the Government left for Moscow, I discussed the problem with prominent Czechs, who gave me the impression that they were prepared to permit something like 800,000 non-Nazi Sudetens to remain. But apparently local feeling has been too strong.

* * *

Much is being done to whet, if little to satisfy, the appetite of that long neglected section of the community, the ordinary housewife. The Coal Utilisation Council, in an exhibition in Conduit Street, are showing their latest domestic appliances. The living room open fire that heats the water is no new idea, but now the principle is extended so that the same fire heats the water, the cooker in the adjacent kitchen, and conveys warmth to a room above (only one room; the rest of the bedrooms stay chilly). Then there are continuous burning cookers with two different temperature ovens and a boiler for hot water; this, like most of the appliances, is fuelled with anthracite or coke. There are also neat modern ranges for the telescoped kitchen-dining room which is likely to be the lot of so many people. All the installations are intended for small post-war houses; they achieve an efficient use of solid fuel at an economic cost, and go some way to providing overdue domestic reforms. So long, in fact, that we cannot help feeling they are already due to be superseded. Five hundred housewives on an estate, each buying, storing, stoking coal or coke and disposing of the ashes, cannot be the final word in economy of material or labour. But while a large proportion of the population has still no cold water laid on in their homes it is no use talking about the central heating and hot water from the street mains which are now technically possible.

* * *

That a lot of people are interested in discussing serious plans for the post-war world was made quite clear last week, when the National Peace Council held a meeting at the Central Hall, Westminster. Over 5,000 people tried to get into a hall which seats approximately half that number. Hundreds, including a large number of young people, perched precariously on the balcony rails. Another 500 crowded out an overflow meeting at Livingstone Hall, and more than 1,500 were turned away, many of them to attend an open-air overflow which began in the street and was ultimately moved to Hyde Park by the police. The biggest cheers were for Joad's statement that we must get rid of the anarchy of national states, and for Gollancz's demand for a victory of the Left parties at the election. My reason for referring to this meeting amongst the many that are going on in the country at the moment, is that although one or two papers mentioned the fact that an overflow meeting had gone to Hyde Park, the Press said nothing of the meeting itself. I believe that the desire for a serious and constructive post-war policy is as great or greater than it was after the last war. It is still inchoate as well as enthusiastic, and the job of intelligent people is to canalise it and give it shape. Our worst enemy is the cynical journalist who says the people were fooled last time, and prostitutes himself in a campaign to fool them again.

* * *

I have now had the chance of reading *Sweet Liberty*, the play which the Lord Chamberlain has refused to license. It is amusing and serious satire in which entirely mythical American, Russian, British and Chinese officials in a remote hotel meet to settle minority problems while representatives of these Ruritanian minorities seek to knife each other during the conference. In this journal on May 19th a letter appeared from Mr. Ballantine, who had found on inquiry that the Lord Chamberlain had consulted the Foreign Office, which had apparently objected to the play on the ground that it satirised public figures. Three points arise: first, what the Foreign Office has to do with it; secondly, why plays should not satirise public figures; and, thirdly, if that is *verboten*, why this particular play which does not even remotely allude to any actual statesman, official or general, should come under this ban. It is true that the Chinese Chairman is called Kung, but by no stretch of imagination could he be identified with H. H. Kung, and I do not doubt that the author would have willingly altered the names of any of his characters.

* * *

A very attentive listener might have observed an amusing discrepancy in the broadcasting of the signatures appended to the German surrender terms. The British order was: Montgomery, Zhukov, Eisenhower, de Lattre de Tassigny. The American version was: Eisenhower, Zhukov, Montgomery, de Lattre de Tassigny. The Russian version was: Zhukov, Montgomery, Eisenhower, de Lattre de Tassigny. I missed the French broadcast. I have no doubt who their winner was in the Berlin stakes. But how were the others placed?

CRITIC

## THIS ENGLAND

**A 5 - prize for the first entry in this column goes to Ian McGill.**

**Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.**

Mr. William MacDonald, of Pitkerro Nurseries, Dundee: "You say this body is financed by Lord Beaverbrook."

Mr. Moffat: I said by the *Daily Express*.

Mr. MacDonald: Lord Beaverbrook's policy throughout the war has been one of aiding and abetting Communism. Is it natural for us to sit here and listen to you speaking on this policy when Lord Beaverbrook stands for Communism in his paper?—*Scottish Daily Express*.

Newmarket horses will be able to race at other meetings . . .

It will be a great boon to Newmarket trainers, whose horses must be heartily sick of always running on the one track, as they have had to do since 1941. —*Daily Herald*.

Many Americans still wonder whether there are not basically irreconcilable differences between Communism and Capitalism.—From article in *Yorkshire Post*.

# A VOICE FROM BERLIN

RETURNING to London from a longish spell in Germany, one realises how startlingly problems vary according to the distance from which they are seen. Back here, everyone asks questions. But until one's mind is adjusted to the new focus, they seem irrelevant. Slowly one begins to realise that the questioner has a whole set of assumptions which completely contradict your own. He assumes that Mr. Grew of the American State Department is not totally misleading when he asserts "the outlook is very favourable. Only a few details remain to be worked out with the Russians." Even stranger, he assumes that the Military Government now in operation is working according to a policy.

My experience suggests that Military Government officers are each of them trying to carry out a Manual full of detailed regulations without any picture of an overall policy. But not one of the dozens with whom I have talked has the vaguest idea what the end result of it all is meant to be. Is Germany to be dismembered? Is there to be a Central German Government? Or is Military Government to take its place? What forces in Germany should replace Nazism and Militarism? Will there be co-ordination between the four occupying Powers and if so, in what form? Every one of these questions, whichever way it is answered, vitally affects the work of every Military Government officer in Germany to-day.

I think, for instance, of one with whom I spent several days in a small industrial town in the Rhineland. As usual, he had been dropped off here to run the show with virtually no assistance except for his Manual. Like most Military Government officers, he is keen and ready to do anything; unlike most of his colleagues, he knows a little German. But what has he to do? He must *not* fraternise with the non-Nazi Bürgermeister whom he has cajoled into accepting an unwelcome responsibility, nor must he show any friendliness to the anti-Nazi group which seized power in the town before the arrival of our troops and handed it over intact. Thus, he is prevented from relying on them for advice.

He must *not* do anything to rehabilitate Germany economically, though he also assumes that he must maintain sufficient employment to prevent unrest. He must *not* provide any entertainment or education to German adults or children, nor must he permit them to meet together to entertain or educate each other—except in Church. He must *not* permit the employment in important positions of a single Party member, even though there are several really reliable men in the town who only joined the Party in 1944, after nine years' refusal to do so.

Yes, the negatives are clear enough. But what positive *musts* are there? Must he prepare the people for their future as part of a separate Rheinland? No answer. In selecting men for key positions, what political groups must he back? No answer. Must he budget for this autumn on the potatoes from east of the Elbe which form the basic diet? No answer. Must he expect and prepare the Germans under his charge for a Central German Government or for a period of rule under quadri-partite control? No answer. With the best will in the world no officer can do a good job under such conditions. Anyway, there is a saying in the Army which runs: "If you want promotion, do nothing unusual." When this rule is backed up by a completely negative set of directives, the average British or American officer knows what line to take; let things tick over until someone on top can make up his confounded mind.

The result on the Germans is exactly what might have been expected. As long ago as last September, the civilian population of Western Germany had had enough of the war. They longed for peace and for liberation, not from the Nazis but from the bombs. Apart from a small political minority, they did not positively desire a British or American occupation, and most were a little scared of it. When they talked about it among themselves, they came to the conclusion that they were in for a tough time from the combat troops—they had seen how their own retreating troops behaved. After that unpleasant phase they expected a strenuous period of work for their new Western rulers. That it would be strenuous, they were completely certain. For they had seen the efficiency, precision and gigantic power of our bombers and our armies. They had experienced on their own skins the unpleasant fact that Britain and America could wage total war more totally and with more mechanical and ruthless efficiency than either the Russians or the Germans. They expected the same qualities in our occupation policy.

Their first expectations were not disappointed. The combat troops were rough, and they permitted the foreign workers and prisoners of war to be even rougher. Since they expected this, the Germans took it. But what next?

Days passed. Weeks passed—and nothing happened. Or rather, to be exact, almost anything happened, except a coherent plan. Here in F. all the factories were kept shut by order. Here in L., 20 miles away, permission was granted for their immediate re-opening. Here 30 lbs. of sugar per head were distributed in one week; here, 10 miles away, there was no sugar. Here all anti-Nazis were regarded as suspect and a notorious landowner was made Bürgermeister. Here in the next-door village an Anti-Nazi group, co-operating with the Military Government officials, runs the town. Here Military Government have decided that the only contact permitted to the Bürgermeister is through written petition. Here Bürgermeister and Military Government officials work in the same room with their coats off.

Gradually it began to dawn on the German that this was not the gigantic, precise occupation machine which he had expected to follow the Anglo-American armies. Slowly it dawned on him that the apparatus of occupation consisted of a handful of harassed officials, working with the Urban and Rural District Councils and with the City Councils; and that apart from these officials there existed no administration at all. He began to suspect that the Anglo-Americans, who had won the war by sheer efficiency and organisation, had neither an organisation nor a policy for the occupation. They are prepared to do—nothing with Germany, neither exploit her, nor liberate her, nor dismember her, nor re-educate her. They just want to be tough.

This idea was so unexpected that at first it was unacceptable and when it began to sink in, it induced a baffled lethargy of disillusion. Then something happened. At 9 p.m. one night, just over a fortnight ago, a medium-wave transmitter audible all over Germany began to broadcast a simple news bulletin. The Berlin radio was on the air again—under Russian control.

Within a week, every German, who had a wireless, was listening in at 9 p.m.; and those who had not, were busy passing on and improving the rumours about it. Suddenly, almost over night, Germany pricked up her ears. Here from the most unexpected quarter was what they had been waiting for—their orders.

Listen to Berlin yourself. There is nothing sensational about it. Just the routine Berlin announcer, speaking on behalf of the German administration. He begins with local Berlin news. Ration cards will be distributed outside the factory gates in a certain area. No 5 tram has started running. Two cinemas have been opened. Then he passes on to a straight world news bulletin. The programme ends with a talk by an eminent anti-Nazi, now an official, telling of the purge of Nazis; reminding Party members, that if they have a good record, they will not lose their jobs.

What has made these fifteen minutes the biggest sensation in Germany since Hamburg Radio announced Hitler's death? First that the Germans in Berlin are apparently running their own radio, and the Russians are staying in the background. Second, that every day these Germans in Berlin have a detailed story to tell of things accomplished. Some of the things they have to tell are unpleasant; for instance, that the Russians are prepared to shoot 50 Nazis for each Russian who is murdered. But for the most part it is a story of ordinary working people led by well-known anti-Nazis, encouraged to rebuild life among the rubble and to start the work of national restitution. And behind that nightly story the German in the British and American zones, in his tired desperation, glimpses hope for the future from a great Power. The more he feared the Red Bogey, before his town was overrun by the Anglo-American armies, the more he wants to believe he was deceived about the Russians, now that he has felt the fumbling and waywardness of the conquerors in the West.

And so at 9.30 p.m., just to make sure, he switches over to Radio Luxemburg or the B.B.C. Yes, there is no doubt about it. The same voice he used to listen to as his one link with sanity and civilisation; the same excellence of writing and delivery which often made Russian propaganda sound phoney; the same objectivity and detachment of tone which long ago convinced him that if the worst came to the worst, he was glad that he lived in Western Germany. But now the very qualities which he used to admire jar on him. The coolness is now tepid; the objectivity is flat. For the will to victory which gave those broadcasts power to make him fear as well as admire, has disappeared. There is no military success now to be celebrated without boasting; no thousand bomber raids to report without gloating. Now the cool, objective voice sounds tired and dispirited as it tells of a world warring without war and an occupation so purposeless that it can only be described in clichés.

The voice from Berlin can, of course, be dismissed as a smart Russian propaganda trick. No doubt, it is partly that. But it is also a good deal more; it is a warning to the Western Powers and to democrats in all countries, that, whatever Washington and London may do or think, the Russian Occupation Manual—if it exists—does not consist of negatives.

R. H. S. CROSSMAN

# WHERE TO PUT A FACTORY

ABOUT four miles from Dunmow on the Bishop's Stortford road, Mr. Farr, a maker of steel plates, bought a site of 17 acres and proposes to set up a factory and with it a few of the necessary workers' houses. The area was scheduled by the Dunmow Council for agricultural and residential purposes. The issue was referred to a Ministerial inquiry last week; arguments for and against were heard, and letters and petitions from the local residents were put in as evidence. The *News Chronicle* rightly called it a "test case."

To me the issue is quite clear. For twenty years between the two wars, many of us have waged a constant battle against the sporadic, uncontrolled development of Britain. We won some important victories and the principle of town and country planning was embodied in Statute, and accepted by all parties. We have a Town and Country Planning Ministry, whose powers unfortunately overlap with those of the Ministry of Health and several other departments. If Mr. Farr, and others who may be less scrupulous than he, were allowed to build factories on scheduled areas, refusing, as Mr. Farr has done, other sites proposed for industrial development by the local councils, then the horror of ribbon development, condemned by every responsible observer, will once again go on unchecked. Mr. Farr will build his factory and group of cottages; small shops will then acquire frontages along the same road;

then there will be a garage and more cottages, another factory, and so on, all the way from Bishop's Stortford to Dunmow, from Dunmow to Braintree or Chelmsford, and indeed to anywhere else. The result will be such as we already know on many English roads. No one can say whether they are country or town. The fields and woodlands behind the developed front become sterilised country. They lose much of their farming value and their beauty is wasted. The unfortunate dwellers in the cottages have no communal life; they belong to no living tradition; they are far from the amenities of the town and they have none of the alternative advantages of country life. Soon what was once a country road becomes a half developed speedway; children run from the cottages under the wheels of the passing cars; factory lorries block the way. Soon the road is found to be far too narrow for the new kind of traffic that must pass through it. Then we have to build a new road through another piece of country to by-pass the road we have already ruined, till in its turn that too is sporadically developed and the whole countryside becomes a chaos, which is neither town nor country nor suburbia nor industrialised, nor indeed anything but a new slum area which in time we have to agitate to remove. This sequence of events is to me so familiar and the principle involved so clear that I should be opposed to Mr. Farr's scheme if he had been not a manufacturer of sheet metal but a maker of golden harps for the heavenly choir.

To the people of the district these wider considerations are not at all clear. The opposition to building the factory is largely supported by well-to-do residents, who value above everything the peace of a countryside which has as yet been singularly little disturbed by the sprawling tentacles of the London octopus. A factory means to them noise, an industrial population and the end of that tranquillity for which they sought when they went to Essex. The workers in the area very naturally regard this as a snobbish and selfish view, and readily signed a petition in favour of the factory. I talked to some of my friends—a publican, farm workers, a bus-driver, a local doctor and others. In the pub they complained that the snobs wanted to keep the countryside and never thought of the interests of the workers, who have often no alternative in this district to the £3 a week they can get on the farms. Their whole status, they point out, is improved if there is the alternative of factory work in the district. When I pointed out that there are other sites for factories, and asked whether they would themselves approve of a factory in their own village, put down anywhere the owner liked, without reference to local opinion, the bus-driver bluntly said he had not heard that point before and that made it quite different. The publican said slowly, "of course, there must be some control about it; you can't just have factories anywhere the owners want to put them." One of the leaders of the workers who had supported the erection of the factory, admitted after the inquiry that he hadn't understood that there was a genuine case against the factory when he started his agitation.

On one point those who support the erection of the factory are absolutely right. We need factories away from London, and industrial opportunities for the sons of agricultural labourers. Some comfortable country houses will have to be disturbed in the creation of new satellite towns or garden cities. It is useless for landowners and middle-class week-enders to complain against the erection of factories unless alternative schemes of development exist. Takeley, the area on the Dunmow road in question, which has already suffered a good deal from sporadic development, might have been selected as the site for a new satellite town. Actually, the Harlow area, some ten miles away, is named as an appropriate site in the Abercrombie scheme for Greater London. If the public knew where development was going to take place, controversies like this at Dunmow would never arise. We need a policy of balanced industrial and rural development, not only a programme for "saving the countryside." Town and country planning is a positive, not a negative, conception; we must resist the attempts of Mr. Farr and the other manufacturers to build their factories where they please, but if we are to succeed in denying them this right to turn England into a half-suburbanised and half-industrialised chaos, we must insist that the Government make up its mind about the Abercrombie scheme and without further delay get on with the job of ordered development.

KINGSLEY MARTIN

## PETER GRIMES—I

By the time these words are printed an important musical event will have occurred—or, rather, two simultaneous events. The return of the Sadler's Wells Opera Company, after six years of exile, to their home in Rosebery Avenue, would have been welcome enough in any case, even if the occasion had been celebrated by nothing fresher than *Madame Butterfly*. But the Wells have done the thing in style. Nothing would content them but a world première, namely that of Benjamin Britten's first full-length opera, *Peter Grimes*. Of this work and its performance I hope to give a full account next week. What follows is a prefatory note based on a glimpse of the score, on the preliminary lecture-concert arranged by its publishers at the Wigmore Hall, and on a study of libretto, sources, and certain expository material which has appeared.

The most useful preparation one can make before hearing an opera is to read its libretto; and this holds good whatever its literary quality may be, for the listener is thereby relieved of the distracting effort to follow the *logical* course of the stage action and can surrender wholly to the emotional and atmospheric impact of music and drama. The book of *Peter Grimes*, by Montagu Slater, has been published by Messrs. Boosey & Hawkes; and another publication, by the firm of John Lane, contains essays by composer and librettist, a reprint of the broadcast talk on Crabbe by E. M. Forster which set the idea stirring in the composer's mind, and a long and quite admirable musical analysis (with plenty of music-type) by Edward Sackville West. Both these pamphlets cost half a crown, and both are illustrated by the designer of the stage sets, Kenneth Green. To complete a utilitarian paragraph, I would add that the opera is to be repeated to-night (June 9th) and on June 12th, 15th, 20th, 25th and 29th. The B.B.C., having failed to broadcast even a part of the first performance, shows as yet no indication of repairing this unfortunate lapse.

Crabbe published his poem *The Borough* in 1810. It is a series of twenty-four "letters" which paint a minute and realistic picture of a place which he knew inside out, the poor fishing-town of Aldeburgh in Suffolk. His account of its customs and inhabitants is neither flattering nor romantic, but it is honest, it possesses great social and historical interest, and it is written in rhyming couplets which rise at moments to a grey, sober beauty of their own. To Britten, working in 1941 in the brilliant sunlight of California, the homespun, truthful words seem to have brought a rush of nostalgic affection; this was the county and this the weather-torn coastline which he had known all his life. The notion of building an opera around Crabbe's poem began to attract him, and the generosity of Koussevitsky allowed him to realise his dream.

To write good operas it is not enough to be a good composer; it is not even enough to have dramatic sense. Unless the composer is to be his own librettist, he must possess the knack of first choosing the right one and then bullying him unmercifully. In the book of *Grimes* I do not know the precise proportions of Britten and Slater, but, broadly speaking, the result is a success: a rapid and dramatic action, full of atmosphere, of vivid country characters, and of genre pictures of a kind ideally suited to musical treatment. There is a pub scene with the storm growling outside and bursting in whenever the door is opened; a sunny Sunday morning on the beach with matins drifting through the open church door as a background to dialogue; a dance at the Moot Hall, with an unseen stage-band; a dreadful interlude of sea-fog and terror before the final scene. With all these racy qualities it is of minor importance that the text shows no particular literary distinction. What is perhaps a more serious defect resides in the conception of the principal character.

Who is Peter Grimes? In Crabbe he is a mere brute, guilty of the manslaughter (if not the murder) of his father and of no less than three poor workhouse boys whom he has bought as his apprentices with the deliberate intention of ill-treating them; "untouched by pity, unstung by remorse, and uncorrected by shame . . . a mind depraved and flinty": in fact, the perfect S.S. Camp Commandant. In the opera nothing is heard of the father, and the number of unfortunate boys is reduced to two, an inquest on one of whom is in progress as the curtain rises, while the other is bumped off during the action—unintentionally, it is true, but as the result of callous treatment. Grimes himself wears a very different aura. He is not presented as a worthy character (that would be too much), but as an outcast: romantic, Byronic and misunderstood. There is supposed to be something poetic and elemental about him which sets him apart from the bickering and petty gossip of the township. "They listen to money, these Borough gossips. I listen to dreams and fiery visions." I cannot, however, feel that the librettist has made much of a case for this view of Grimes. For what precisely are these dreams and visions of his? Why, of making his pile, rehabilitating himself in the eyes of his fellows, and settling down in matrimony with his only champion, a forty-year-old widow schoolmistress? A laudable ambition, of course—but surely the last word in bourgeois respectability! Meanwhile, no opportunity is missed of maligning Mrs. Sedley, described by the librettist as a "rentier," who suspects Peter's cruelties and arouses the townspeople against him; but what neither composer nor librettist seems to realise is that, after all, the sympathetic schoolmarm was wrong (and therefore, in effect, an accessory in the second boy's death), whereas poor Mrs. Sedley was dead right.

I know that operas are not ethical treatises, and that I shall be accused of taking too literal a view of a poetic creation. Maybe. But is there not something shocking in the attempt to win our sympathies for a character *simply because* he is an outlaw and an enemy of society—and no more questions asked? What I am quite prepared (especially after the Wigmore Hall concert) to believe is that the richness and dramatic power of Britten's music will enable us to ignore (for the time being) an adolescent conception of man and society which is in sober truth indefensible. In the theatre we may well be lulled into acquiescence; but at home, shall we not begin to wonder?

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

## RADIO NOTES

*Belsen.* This broadcast was not inevitable. The B.B.C. could, with some show of reason, have shirked it. Many will, I make no doubt, have wished they had done so, and will even have blamed those responsible for attempting such an assault on their feelings. I cannot but think they were wrong and the Corporation abundantly justified. In any case, the broadcast erred, if at all, on the side of restraint; but a condemnation gains by being delivered in a cold, grave, controlled manner. The Jewish religious service, and the singing children, had no special quality in themselves; they were moving only because we knew the context in which they arose—the tattered spruce, of all trees the most hideously unfriendly; the immitigable wire; the stacks of corpses; the mauve lazar-figure mumbling about in the mud and filth; the instinctive guards, prognathous and bulging, with their toy-shop faces, mouse-trap lips, and china eyes. The British soldier's description of the dead baby, and the Czech girl's narrative, on the other hand, froze one's blood. Unlike the camera, the microphone cannot lie. The poker voice betrays itself, the tiny sob, herald of the long delayed hysterical collapse, vibrates intolerably through the loud-speaker. These things are familiar in the form of acting; when we know them to be real, they shock. But insufficiently. Arthur Koestler's reconstruction

of a Nazi concentration camp, broadcast three years ago, was, I seem to remember, more immediately telling than these fragments of reality. But in fact it needs the imagination of a Flaubert to communicate such horrors to those who have not perceived them. I am not advocating a radio dramatisation of *Salammbô*; but for an adequate idea of the last days of Nazi Germany we must turn to the final chapters of that unflinching masterpiece. There, in the last stages of the war between Carthage and the mercenary armies, three hundred years before Christ, the ultimate savagery is revealed without comment. But Belsen is still worse, because we, after all, belong—however tenuously—to the Christian era.

"*Hush! There are Ladies Present.*" Those who hate the obvious, love the sly; and if Peter Watts seems to me at present in the front rank of radio humourists, that is partly because he does not explain his jokes. Not that Dr. Thomas Bowdler, the notorious expurgator, could easily fail to make a cat laugh: Mr. Watts had only to let him speak for himself. A character straight out of Samuel Butler. Of course Bowdler was an unctuous snob. Of course he hated France. But was he a humbug? I believe not: his efforts were too naïve. Mr. Watts's touch is light and he left us to draw the obvious conclusion—that Bowdler's incredible alterations and erasures in the texts of Shakespeare and Gibbon were the result of a deep-seated sexual repression. Dennis Arundell's delivery of the part was delightfully plausible. The only objection I have to make to this fluent programme is on the score of length. The last ten minutes of the script took one no further: the point could only be made over and over again.

*Henry IV.* Under-rehearsal is writ large over this unfortunate production. It is not simply a question of roughness here and there: a cast of unusually intelligent actors simply gabble their lines at break-neck speed, making hay of the verse as well as of the sense. I venture to think that, in starting the play with the last scene of *Richard II*, and in his liberal use of narration, Robert Gittings has got hold of the right end of the stick. But such narration should be reduced to the minimum; there was, I felt, too much of it in this adaptation. On Prince Hal's first appearance, for instance, it was surely unnecessary to interrupt the scene in order to point out that the Prince was now going to show us a different side of his character, because the ensuing soliloquy ought to make this change perfectly clear;—ought to, but in this case did not, because Michael Warre muffed the speech. And Laurence Olivier, as the narrator, was casual to the point of inaudibility, thus throwing into more glaring relief the over-acting of the cast. One would hope for a general improvement in future episodes of the play, if the whole thing had not been recorded in advance. We may at least expect some further pleasure from Ralph Richardson's expert *Falstaff*.

RECOMMENDATIONS.—*June 10th.* Debussy: Images (2.15); Pictures Come Back from the National Gallery (Talk by Sir Kenneth Clark, 9.15); Liszt Piano Music (Julius Isserlis, 10.0).

*June 11th.* "What's the Point of Music?" (Reginald Jacques, 7.40); "Mandalay" (9.35); Anthology of the Month (10.45).

*June 12th.* Sibelius: Sixth Symphony (G.F.P. 6.0).

*June 13th.* Brahms: Requiem (7.35).

*June 14th.* Henry IV, Episode 3 (9.35).

*June 15th.* "Jazz in Occupied Europe" (G.F.P. 6.0); Gladys Young in "Thine Inheritance" (8.0).

*June 16th.* Symphony Concert (2.30); Galsworthy's *Loyalties* (9.35).

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

## MUSIC

THROUGHOUT June and July, on Saturdays and Sundays (6.30 to 8.0 p.m.), orchestral concerts will take place in the William III Orangery at Hampton Court Palace. The programmes, which are wide in scope, including classical and modern music, are remarkably well put together. The performances are in the hands of the New London Orchestra (Conductor: Alec Sherman) and the Jacques String Orchestra (Conductor: Reginald Jacques). Some excellent soloists are taking part. A more delightful entertainment for warm evenings would be hard to devise. Tickets and prospectus from the Resident Superintendent of Works at the Palace, and from Messrs. Keith Prowse. Thanks to C.E.M.A.

Arthur Grumiaux, the young Belgian violinist who has been touring England for Ensa, is a considerable virtuoso. Uniting a warm, absolutely steady and remarkably full tone to an apparently complete technique, he excels at present—as perhaps his youth might lead one to expect—in the concerto style, so that in chamber music he seems insufficiently aware that a violin sonata is a duet, not a virtuoso piece with obbligato accompaniment. At the moment, then, music sounds as if it came almost too easily to him; but this is doubtless a mere fault of youth, and otherwise there can be no question that here is a soloist of the highest order who should be encouraged to return here as soon as possible. LIONEL CRANFIELD

## THE MOVIES

**"The Way to the Stars," at the London Pavilion**
**"Without Love," at the Empire**
**"Murder, He Says," at the Plaza**
**"Tarzan and the Amazons," at the Tivoli**

Do you remember the pilot in *Coastal Command*, one of the more memorable if less sensational of our documentaries? Mr. Michael Redgrave, as the Squadron Leader in *The Way to the Stars*, goes in for the same moustache and something of the manner. He is moodier, though, and his "Good show, chaps," has perhaps a less convincing ring. So tiny the differences between the clipped man of action and his stage brother, tiny but essential! I remember the pilot of *Coastal Command*, but I shan't remember Mr. Redgrave, except perhaps as Mr. Redgrave giving a good performance. That can't be helped, of course, but *The Way to the Stars* does lack that little extra touch of life which makes both good documentaries like *Coastal Command* and good near-documentaries like *The Way Ahead*. One mustn't, however, complain too much of *The Way to the Stars*, which is touchingly true by its own standards. A field with a Doomsday Book stone in the corner is turned into an aerodrome, experiences the Battle of Britain, takes to bombers, is lent to the Americans, and then the sheep come back to graze. Everyday life on the runways, in the control room, in the mess and in a local saloon bar, goes on through these various phases, and it is a life apart, with the gaps on the score-board quickly filled, the lighter or the pilot's jacket passing down a chain of owners. The reticences of this theme are admirably conveyed, and the subtleties of the script (Terence Rattigan) are sensitively enlarged by Anthony Asquith's direction. Solid performances by John Mills, Michael Redgrave, Stanley Holloway, Basil Radford, Douglass Montgomery, Rosamund John and others. It is a film that moved me at times, and yet I find it difficult to be enthusiastic about it. Its tameness, however — for it is, despite many merits, a little tame—deserves better than the sensationalism that usually clouds this theme. Anglo-American relations, as the Forts replace the Lancasters, are amusingly and tactfully explored.

For the theme of *Without Love* one can have nothing but contempt. The title should have been *Marriage Without Bed*, because that's all it comes to. Yes, again! Two people marry, in order apparently to invent a high-pressure oxygen mask, and when it comes to bedtime they take different ways down the corridor. Each, for a different reason, has said good-bye to fun: one is preserving the memory of a dead husband, the other tries to forget a bit of fluff, and this (in Hollywood) is how they set about it. With Mr. Spencer Tracy and Miss Hepburn in the roles it is highly unconvincing. But Mr. Tracy sleepwalks; that will serve later on. Miss Hepburn from the beginning has used all her wiles. How long will they be able to hold out? Just long enough, by the luckiest of chances, to make a picture. Then he takes her to him, or she takes him, I forget which. Hurrah! Good old Urge, we thought you were there! And there's the medal for the high-pressure oxygen mask to put on the dressing-table. So yet another secret in the history of the war effort is revealed by our series, "The March of Love."

The horrible thing is that I enjoyed this shiny twaddle more than *The Way to the Stars*. Most of the time, I found Tracy and Hepburn, on top gear, irresistible. Better leave it at that.

For ten minutes I thought *Murder, He Says* was going to be one of the funniest films of the year. It parodies the drama of the brutal peasantry; might almost be aimed at *Goupi Mains Rouges*, a brilliant French piece, not yet publicly exported. Fred MacMurray, public opinion investigator, blunders into a farmstead where Granmaw is being poisoned, where whips are cracked and guns talk. Seventy thousand dollars are hidden somewhere: in the bank, as it happens, but no one knows that to start with, except Granmaw. Each sickening thud is meant to be funnier, and so it often is. But the whole film is less entertaining than exhausting.

Tarzan, jungle-lording it at the Tivoli, seems to me sadder and wiser than the man I knew twenty years ago. He has given up hallooing, though he still swings and swims like an old hand. But how like Bournemouth the jungle has grown! Tarzan's house might be "Liana View"; there's someone called Jane who pops in from civilisation and does the cooking; junior gets into scrapes with crocodiles; a tame chimp does all but talk; three tame elephants carry the suit-cases. And when Tarzan approaches, the lions just buzz off. Not at all my idea. However, over the mountains (in Branksome Chine, maybe) there is a race of Amazons led by Maria Ouspenskaya, and Tarzan clips his English more than ever. Tarzan try North Pole, no?

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

## PLAYS AND PICTURES

**Ballet Rambert, at the King's Theatre, Hammersmith**

The latest fruit from the C.E.M.A. cornucopia is Mme. Rambert's company with two new ballets in the repertory. *Simple Symphony* has inventive choreography by Walter Gore, tasteful decor by Ronald Wilson, and music by Benjamin Britten. This is good enough to dance to, but not up to the composer's usual level. In any case the playing of the orchestra made one sigh for the admirable piano-playing that used to add to our enjoyment of the Rambert ballets. *The Fugitive* has highly expressive choreography by Andree Howard, pleasant decor by Hugh Stevenson, and undistinguished music by Leonard Salzedo. The fugitive's modern costume placed the theme too close to reality, so that one began wondering why a wounded man wasted his energy in pirouettes. Joan McLelland revealed herself a dancer and mime of uncommon promise. Prokoviev's *Peter and the Wolf* is a charming work, embellished by Frank Staff's choreography and Guy Sheppard's decor. The Rambert Ballet is always distinguished and enjoyable, nor does it ever challenge comparison with one's most magnificent memories of past splendours. Sally Gilmour, Brenda Hamlyn, Elizabeth Schooling and Walter Gore are supported by a company distinguished for youthfulness and precision.

**"The Government Inspector," at the Arts**

Enchanting is the last adjective one would attach to the run of farces, but once or twice in a generation we get a farce that enchants. Such a perennial is *The Importance of Being Earnest*, and Gogol's *The Government Inspector* is in the same rare, delectable class. It is wildly funny, this imbroglio of a spendthrift clerk, who gets mistaken for a visiting Government Inspector, a lot funnier than the *Charley's Aunt* and its caricature of human nature swings irresistibly between satire and fancy. The corrupt local councillors grovelling before their supposed judge, making him drunk, slipping roubles into his hand, are all and individually funny, and if anything were needed to make them funnier it is the provincial imposter putting on grand airs. The fun doesn't droop for three acts, though we know he will be found out, and the real Inspector, like Fortinbras, will enter on the bloody scene. The production at the Arts is triumphantly light and witty. We get to revel in all the characters, and particularly in Mr. Geoffrey Dunn's lordly nobody, Mr. Morris Sweden's Mayor, Mr. John Garside as inspector of schools, and Mr. Peter Cresswell's hospital governor. If London playgoers know an enjoyable thing, this play will run and run

# Correspondence

## MR. CHURCHILL'S LINE

SIR,—For two years it has been part of my job to study the enemy propaganda to his troops. We noticed that while Germany was winning and German troop morale was high, the German propaganda line was positive, stressing what German soldiers were fighting to win. As Germany was driven on to the defensive, and troop morale showed the first signs of defeatism, German propaganda slowly changed from the hope *motif* to the fear *motif*; from emphasis on the fruits of victory to emphasis on the horrors of defeat; from a lofty disregard for the enemy to stress on his bestiality. In the final days of the war, German troop propaganda was almost exclusively based on the following themes:—

(1) If they win, you will be castrated.
(2) If they win, your savings will go.
(3) If they win, you will be deported.
(4) If they win, you will lose your home.

Listening to Mr. Churchill on Monday, I noticed an uncanny similarity. Two years ago, he broadcast a positive, constructive speech about plans for the future; now he says:—

(1) If they win, they will introduce a Gestapo.
(2) If they win, they will destroy Parliament.
(3) If they win, they will take your Post Office savings.
(4) If they win, your cottage home is at their mercy.

Can it be that Mr. Churchill also feels that the tide is flowing against him? PROPAGANDA ANALYST

## THE SYRIAN ISSUE

SIR,—The attitude of informed French opinion to the Syria-Lebanon problem is being consistently ignored by the British Press. The map shows that of two oil pipe-lines from Irak to the Mediterranean one debouches at Haifa in Palestine and the other passes to the North through Syria. The French are hinting that the present trouble is a frame-up engineered by British-American interests, largely to ensure the future prosperity of the Standard Oil Company. With Syria under British protection, the dangerously Socialist French would have no chance of interfering with one of the arteries of big business.

That *Le Canard Enchaîné*—a satirical paper, appearing weekly—represents democratic France is at least suggested by the fact that it was suppressed throughout the German domination of Europe. *Canard* also never loses an opportunity of calling attention to blunders—whether committed by progressives or reactionaries. Here are a few lines scattered at random throughout the issue of May 30th:

"*Enfin nous allons avoir une Paix standard.*"
"At last we are going to have a 'standard' peace."
"*Au Liban, les Anglais parlent . . . en langue d'oil.*"
"In the Lebanon the English are talking . . . oil."

Or, more precisely (you will, I trust, accept as reasonably accurate the following translation, which can be checked by reference to *La Mare aux Canards* on page 2 of the issue I have cited):

OIL ON THE FIRE

This affair stinks of petroleum.

There is no doubt that the Lebano-Syrian problem would never have arisen if France had not had (thanks to the only pipe-line over which she has any control) the opportunity of tapping some buckshee petrol for herself. . . .

The United States, too (who have also got their eye on that pipe-line) are pretty much in favour of turning France out. If it's going to be a question of a fight, they prefer to see only two contestants in it.

Perhaps this is why nobody actually insisted on the presence of General de Gaulle at Cairo or Yalta.

It is too easy just to shrug our shoulders and say "the French were never any good at colonising—look at the trouble they had with the Riffs—and the Druses." This time we must look a little deeper for the causes of the confusion.

21, Soho Square, London, W.1. DONALD ALEXANDER

---

SIR,—No useful purpose, least of all the cause of Anglo-French harmony and of peace in the Levant, is served by the drawing of inaccurate parallels between the relation of Great Britain and Iraq on the one hand and of France and the Levant States on the other. I refer to the paragraph headed "The Syrians, the French and Ourselves," on p. 346 of your issue of June 2nd, and in particular to the sentence:—"Our own relations with Iraq have been in the past no happier than hers with Syria, and we have twice had to bomb its people into submission."

The British interpretation of the words "Mandate" and "Independence" have been quite different from the French interpretation. In 1922 when the mandates began, Syria and Lebanon were far more advanced than Iraq. By 1932 the British authorities had created a national army and progressively transferred executive authority over all departments of the administration and was able to claim that Iraq was now able to stand alone and qualify for admission to the League of Nations. Throughout these ten years there had been not unnaturally a tug-of-war between the impatience of the nationalists and the caution of the responsible mandatory, but never once did the latter resort to force to impose its will.

Your columnist does not specify on what two occasions the people were "bombed into submission." On no occasion between 1922 and 1932 was a bomb dropped otherwise than in support of the Iraqi Government against armed tribesmen defying its authority. Since 1932, not a single bomb has been dropped in anger by the R.A.F. except during May 1941, when Rashid Ali and his clique usurped power, drove out the lawful Regent, invited in the Germans and declared a state of war with Great Britain.

To-day Anglo-Iraqi relations are governed by a treaty of alliance negotiated fifteen years ago. Some of the ancillary arrangements, such as the Judicial Agreement have already lapsed; other provisions have become obsolete and would no doubt be omitted in any new treaty negotiated to-day. In contrast, even at this late date, the French appear to be aiming at a treaty more resembling the Anglo-Iraqi treaty of the beginning of the mandate.

Your columnist should visit Beyrut, Damascus, and Baghdad and ascertain the truth for himself. In the first two he would find in all classes from Cabinet Ministers downwards a feeling of bitter resentment against the French. In Iraq he would be astonished, not only by the cordiality of the relations between the Government and His Majesty's Embassy, but by the genuine feelings of friendship and even affectionate regard which all classes, official and unofficial, and notably the nationalist leaders of the 1922-32 tug-of-war, show for the British advisers, inspectors and technicians employed without any treaty compulsion. It will take much more than treaties imposed on unwilling governments to reproduce for France and the Levant States anything resembling the relations that to-day unite Great Britain and Iraq.

Lock Island, Marlow, Bucks. GEOFFREY STEPHENSON

## HOUSING

SIR,—I have been interested to learn from your correspondence columns of so many houses in England being kept out of occupation in this time of shortage by their use for storage purposes, by lack of repairs, by covenants forbidding sub-letting, or by wealthy owners simply deciding not to let their property. Your correspondents may be interested to know that an act dealing with all these difficulties was passed just a year ago by the Government of Northern Ireland. This act, the Housing (Requisitioning of Premises) Act (Northern Ireland) 1944, gives powers to local authorities to compel owners to let their houses, to requisition premises for human habitation,


2nd impression now ready

**Algerian Adventure**

JOY COLLIER

"—the story of two young women who went holidaying in Morocco and Algeria on little money. To such, adventures come almost naturally, and Miss Collier knows how to tell of them lightly and light-heartedly. I enjoyed it from start to finish."
—*Illustrated London News*

*Fully Illustrated by the Author*
21s. *net*

George Allen & Unwin Ltd

---

*By the foremost Indian novelist of to-day*

MULK RAJ ANAND

**THE BIG HEART**

*Daily Telegraph*: "The pages are crowded with Indian types, vividly conceived." *Daily Worker*: "Mulk Raj Anand is beyond question the outstanding novelist of our day—his pages teem with passion and turmoil." 8/6

*A novel of the last years of Alexander Pushkin*

LEONID GROSSMAN

**DEATH of a POET**

The author writes with remarkable skill and with a delightfully romantic yet clear, flowing style. His portrait of Pushkin is a fine piece of characterisation—vital and human. *Just Published* 9/6

HUTCHINSON

**INTERNATIONAL AUTHORS**
47, Princes Gate, S.W.7. LTD.

---

NEW **FABER** BOOKS

**The Left Was Never Right**

**QUINTIN HOGG, M.P.**

A damning reply to *Guilty Men*, *The Trial of Mussolini*, *Your M.P.*, *etc.* This book, however, is not only first-rate political polemic—it is a fearless and clear-sighted analysis of the political and national weaknesses that so nearly led to utter disaster. "The main object of this book," Captain Hogg says, "is not recrimination but policy. We have all made mistakes—not excluding the Conservative Party. I am more concerned to show what some of these mistakes were, and to hope that we may all profit by them, than to pillory those who made them." 4s. 6d.

**Redbrick and These Vital Days**

**BRUCE TRUSCOTT**

This sequel to *Red Brick University* discusses post-war problems such as inter-university co-ordination, salaries, residence, specialisation, professorial freedom, and the position of women. After discussing planning, extra-mural and regional work, the author examines the Norwood, McNair and Fleming Reports. 10s. 6d.

---

*poetry*

***Susanne Knowles***

*BIRTH OF VENUS*

These are poems springing from an educated and sophisticated mind. This small collection of verse shows real achievement.
JUST PUBLISHED 4s.

***Edmund Blunden***

*SHELLS BY A STREAM*

"Edmund Blunden is certainly one of the best poets we have . . . These poems are amongst the most genuine productions of our time."—*The New Statesman.*
NEW IMPRESSION 5s.

*MACMILLAN*
& CO., LTD.

to enforce removal of stored goods and to have alterations and repairs carried out. The act is permissive and its operation subject to supervision and control by the Ministry of Home Affairs. By the last figures which I saw published this spring, the Belfast corporation, administering the act in a rather conservative spirit, had already made use of these powers in over 400 cases. In proportion to population, this would represent about 7,000 cases in greater London; but, since the difficulties mentioned seem to be more prevalent in England than they have been in Belfast, similar legislation in England might produce greater results.

HUGH SHEARMAN

36 Cliftonville Road,
Belfast.

## SUDETEN GERMANS

SIR,—The undersigned freely elected representatives of 300,000 Sudeten workers are alarmed by recent announcements of the Czechoslovak Government foreshadowing indiscriminate revenge against the whole Sudeten population.

On May 11th the Deputy Prime Minister, Gottwald, called for wholesale expulsion of the German and Magyar minorities in Czechoslovakia numbering four million people. On May 14th the spokesman of the Czech Army, General Svoboda and Harus, declared that there would be no room for Germans in Czechoslovakia except in prisons or concentration camps. On May 16th President Benes himself on his arrival in Prague expressed the intention of liquidating without compromise the four million Germans and Magyars in Czechoslovakia.

In execution of this policy the Minister of Information, Kopecky, announced that units of the Czechoslovak Army were ready to clear Czechoslovakia by force of the German and Magyar minority populations. In Prague, an official commission for the settlement of Czechs and Slovaks in the borderland has already been set up.

The mass expulsion of four million minority citizens is a continuation of Hitler's racial policy disguised as democratic retribution. It draws no distinction between the guilty and the innocent, between passive citizens and active Nazis and war criminals. It aims at the total destruction of the forces of Sudeten Democracy who fought a heroic struggle against the Henlein Movement, and who were the only faithful allies of the Czech people in their darkest hour.

We recall the testimony of a member of the present Czechoslovak Government, Dr. Hubert Ripka, who wrote in his book, *Munich Before and After*, that the Democrats among the Sudeten Germans, never less than a third of the whole, were as much victims of the Munich decision as the Czech people themselves. Thus, at least one million Sudeten Germans were handed over to Hitler against their will. More than twenty thousand were immediately thrown into concentration camps. To the best of our knowledge the victims of persecution from the ranks of Sudeten Labour and Sudeten Democracy can bear comparison in numbers with those from Belgium and Norway.

We recall the fact that the Sudeten territory with its population was ceded to Germany in 1938 by an international decision to which the Governments of Great Britain and France were partners. A just settlement of the Sudeten problem is therefore a moral responsibility of these Powers.

We have reason to fear that the fate of 3.2 million Sudeten Germans and 700,000 Magyars is being decided, not as it should be, at the Peace Conference, but arbitrarily, for the third time in twenty-five years. Four million people living in the heart of Europe are to be deprived of their homes, their property and their human rights, and that, after hostilities have ceased, without democratic procedure and without impartial judgment.

WENZEL JAKSCH,
EUGEN DE WITTE,
FRANZ KATZ,
Parliamentary Delegation of Sudeten Labour

## PRIMARY EDUCATION

SIR,—Some short while ago Dr. C. E. M. Joad referred to some of the disappointing effects of the New Education Act and quoted the Scottish Primary School Teachers' Report. Although much discussion has been devoted to Secondary education it would be well to look at the Primary end.

The Nursery School plan is first rate, fifteen to a class and all the freedom and play necessary for development at that stage (2–5 years). These same children, however, are suddenly to be plunged into classes of forty at the age of 5 years, to begin formal subjects under mass production methods lacking the interest stimulus, and experiencing methods of discipline which rule out self-expression, initiative and intimacy of general training which are the enabling conditions for fulfilling the further aims of the Act.

As a result of the Act, Preparatories for children from 5 to 11 years which are attached to Secondary Schools are having to close down all over the Country. Statistics of one of these Schools doing research work on the subject of reduced numbers show the very real response to the methods possible with 25 in a class. 220 children drawn as 35 per cent. from Elementary Schools, 30 per cent. from Private Schools, 35 per cent. as beginners (and a waiting list of over a hundred) have enabled 96 per cent. to pass at 11 years into Secondary and Public Schools.

Instead of closing such schools, for the one reason apparently that they are fee-paying (£4 a term), we ought surely to have found a means of extending the benefits to the non-fee-payer, for only in this way can we hope to reduce the numbers in the State Primaries. The immediate result of the hasty closing of these Secondary School Preparatories is to throw us back 70 to 80 years to the "dame school," and the untrained governess; the unrecognised private school demanding an agreement from the parents to keep the new entrants at that school until the age of sixteen; the growth of sectarian (R.C.) schools, and the return of the children to the already over-full State Primary Schools of the district where the classes for some time are not likely to be reduced to even the *maximum* number laid down in the Act of 40 children per teacher.

Until the importance of the early years is realised, and we are able to make the most of available opportunities, our general system will prove disappointing and the levelling at which we aim remain a levelling down.

TEN JUNIOR SCHOOL MISTRESSES

## TRUTH AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

SIR,—Since the technical term *Holy Office* bids fair to become crucial in this discussion, many of your readers may be grateful to learn its exact signification. I quote from pp. 246 and 270 of *The Catholic Encyclopaedic Dictionary* (Cassells, 1930), a very useful reference book.

*Holy Office* is in fact the modern form of the Inquisition, which it superseded in 1542; since 1917 it has controlled the Index of Expurgated Books. Its prefect is the Pope, who presides in person (though, of course, not *ex cathedra*) at all specially important meetings. Its business includes "the protection of faith and morals, the judging of heresy . . . impediments to marriage with non-Catholics . . . and the examination and prohibition of books dangerous to faith or otherwise pernicious."

Dr. Simcox, then, will be lucky if he gets a public answer from this august body. If the Holy Office is as mute as the rest, may I give your readers my experience of nearly forty years in such discussions. Silence is one of the strongest weapons of the Roman Hierarchy: the silence of military discipline. I have often tried to break it down by registering my letters, in breach of ordinary social conventions. This has provoked lively protests, but has been frequently successful.

G. G. COULTON

St. John's College, Cambridge.


**Oppenheimer Series**

THE MATABELE JOURNALS OF ROBERT MOFFAT

VOLUME ONE: 1829-1854

This Series will consist of hitherto unprinted records of the early history of Southern Rhodesia, selected from the Government Archives. The first publication in it, *The Matabele Journals of Robert Moffat*, is mostly comprised of letters written by the missionary during visits to a native chieftain. These present an extensive survey of contemporary conditions and reveal a remarkable personality. *2 vols. Royal 8vo. Illd. Bound buckram. 30s. net per vol.*

CHATTO AND WINDUS

*EVENINGS in ALBANY*

*Clifford Bax*

"He writes agreeably and gently . . . on housekeepers and poets, his friends' love affairs, and 'the Burlington Bomb.'" *Manchester Guardian.*

"A very agreeable piece of Albany nostalgia." *The Observer.*

"An intimate book, and leaves the reader with the impression of having spent some hours in the company of a singularly sensitive and generous host." *Country Life.*

*2nd Impression* 8s. 6d. *net*

*Eyre & Spottiswoode*

**GENERAL ELECTION**

★

SECKER & WARBURG recommend all voters to read

**COUPON OR FREE**

*by* R. W. G. MACKAY. 5s. *net.*

A study of the defects in the British Electoral System which explains how to use your vote to advantage

and

**THE NEW ECONOMY**

*by* ROBERT BOOTHBY, M.P.

6s. *net.*

"A contribution to the literature of economic reconstruction, enlightened, lucid, moderate in exposition." *Spectator.*

**BRITAIN IN PICTURES**

Seventy-three titles have already been published in this attractive series. Many more are in preparation. 'Delightful illustrations, many in colour, are accompanied by letterpress both authoritative and brilliant.' *News Chronicle* Each 4s. 6d.

NEW TITLES INCLUDE:

**PUBLIC SCHOOLS**
*Rex Warner*

**BRITISH FURNITURE MAKERS**
*John Gloag*

**CITY GUILDS OF LONDON**
*Sir Ernest Pooley*

COLLINS
14 ST. JAMES'S PLACE

# BOOKS IN GENERAL

The future historian of our period will certainly be struck by the number of biographies we have written, but not I fancy by their quality and weight. He will accuse us—indeed the critics have already done so—of novelising history. Where we can safely say we have excelled is in the more limited scope and more gracious textures of the biographical portrait. The interminable luggage of greatness interests us less than the concise mysteries of human character, the many overlapping outlines that hold the elusive soul as in a net, the complexity of the human situation in which so much is fixed and yet so much seeded by chance. Where does ego end, where does environment begin? And what is environment—how much of us is in our age, our class or some cross-reflection of these things? What part of us is fixed in the past, perhaps a past remote from our time, and what unconsciously makes the future? To such questions the full-length biographer has time to suggest the answers, but in the long biographies a man or woman's life appears so often to dissolve and disperse among its events; in the portrait, the life crystallises, the focus is strengthened and character outshines the pressures and tendencies imposed upon it from without, as the diamond seems to defy the rock.

The long biographies of our time, from Lytton Strachey to the sympathetic work of writers like Lord David Cecil and Mr. Peter Quennell, are really galleries of portraits and not biographies in the old sense, and since Lytton Strachey they have grown in human if not in historical depth. In general what these books have done is to enlarge the human being and to reinstate the study of human nature as one of the fine arts; and in our world, where we are prejudiced by our class, our education, our race and our beliefs, and where private life is less and less valued as the claims of society become greater, this enlargement of the human being seems enormously important. There are some of the elements of a new humanism in this approach to biography. I hope I may be forgiven by Mr. Quennell for reading into his studious, brilliant and fluent portraits, the text of a Great Cause. But the period he has chosen for his new book, *Four Portraits*,* provokes it. The late eighteenth century is pre-eminently the one when the study of mankind was thought proper; it was the last time in our history when men portrayed themselves boldly and fully as they lived and were not ashamed so to be seen. Limited they indeed were, but they were complete within those limits. We are continuously aware, in all their good and evil, of the extraordinary paradox of their cult of order without, and the unstemmed overflow of human vitality within. Mr. Quennell writes: "Gibbon, Boswell, Sterne, Wilkes are names that evoke, if not the whole of the eighteenth century achievement, some aspects of its fertile and abounding genius." And indeed the piety, the domesticity, the buried fantasies of guilt that came out in the new religions, the humanitarianism of a young man like Wilberforce and the revolutionary spirit of Tom Paine, are not represented by these names. But, as Mr. Quennell continues:

> Unlike in many respects, they were alike in their vitality and their versatility, their devotion to the pleasures of the world and to the satisfactions of the intellect. They lived with gusto; they died regretfully. We place them at once in the architectural setting that belonged to them by right—against sober classical house fronts or behind the large windows of spaciously proportioned rooms, among equipment as sensible in its grace as it is solid in its structure. Theirs was an age conscious of its own enlightenment.

Conscious of its enlightenment, yes, ancestors of every educated man; but unconscious, as Mr. Quennell writes in the epilogue that binds these portraits together, of the direction to which their enlightenment was leading them:

> During the lifetime of our protagonists, the harmonious civilisation they had enjoyed was gradually dissolving; the rule of the profane virtues was almost over; the virtues of the age that followed were far more ambitious, but far more deadly. Perhaps it is as well that few human beings can distinguish the ultimate implications of their own ideas, or survive to witness the final evolution of the movements they have started. . . .

The four portraits in this book are masterly. The writing is distinguished. Mr. Quennell stands at a measured distance from his models at just the right point between formality and intimacy. His grasp of character is complete, his response to life immediate, his judgment is sane, without being phlegmatic. Where many portrait-painters impose their theory and fit the facts to them, Mr. Quennell elucidates the facts. He is serious without being pompous, imaginative and gay without sacrificing his perceptions to the good epigram. His occasional discursions into literary criticism are telling. The Wilkes is perhaps not quite his subject, but it gives a background to the book; the Gibbon says nothing new, for Gibbon and Mr. D. M. Low have already said all there is to say, but here Mr. Quennell's writing excels; the Boswell is the most engaging. But the best of all is the Sterne. I have never read a more illuminating, eloquent and searching study of this author, who brings out all Mr. Quennell's temperament as a biographer and a critic. The fever of Yorick gets into his veins and every moment of that agitated and ambiguous career becomes luminous and dramatic.

I hesitate at only one point in this particular essay. To Sterne is traced that cult of sympathy which was to lead to the emotional excesses of the Jacobins; and though it was said of Sterne that he was the kind of sentimentalist who preferred "whining over a dead ass to relieving a living mother," I must say I find the link with the Terror extremely tenuous. If we are to look for an English link in the emotional chain, I would have said that the line ran from Richardson to Rousseau; despite the fact that Sterne probably invented the word "sentimental" and that sentimentality is the common habit of the egotistical and cruel. But is there any emotional chain at all? The Terror arose from circumstances which are constant and repeated in revolutionary movements and civil wars. Terrors arise not because one loves mankind to the point of tears, but because one fears mankind and does not trust it. They arise from rumours of treachery and not immediately from a perversion of the humane aspiration.

That is my only criticism. For the rest Mr. Quennell's portrait is exquisite. We see the flirt, the fantastic, the cynic, hurrying through life—a man drowning—and drowning others—in impressions.

Most critics have written a virtuous page or two on the subject of Sterne's shortcomings; but Mr. Quennell has naturalised the species perfectly. Sterne pursued women as he pursued words, memories and impressions "rather because of their appeal to the imagination than for their claims on the intellect." His feelings for women were continuous, diffused, unfocussed, some life-long leakage of emotion which may be traced perhaps to his great dislike of his mother and to the fever of the consumptive. It is the moment in Mr. Quennell's eye for the decisive metaphor:

> He was aged twenty-five or twenty-six when he met and attached himself to Elizabeth Lumley; but his behaviour during this episode was so odd, so characteristic and so true to the pattern followed by his subsequent philanderings, that we gain no impression, as we observe him, of inexperience or immaturity. Indeed, his gyrations have a strangely instinctive air. Some inward compulsion seems to determine the curious amatory dance that he weaves about his mistress; and, though he is continually appealing to the deepest human emotions, there is something, if not quite mechanical, yet startlingly inhuman about the postures he adopts—fluttering in tremulous rounds, quivering suspended in rapt excitement, as do certain birds whose amatory displays would appear to be designed no less to stimulate their own erotic frenzy than to capture the attention and arouse the senses of a casually encountered female.

Again we see Mr. Quennell's gift of definition at a much later period of Sterne's life, when the affair with Miss Fourmantelle was on. This little episode fizzed pleasantly for a while, for Miss Fourmantelle was a singer, independent, beautiful and ambitious; and Sterne was a celebrity; and there are few sensations more innocent, more pleasurable and less likely to last than the mutual flatterings of vanity. These did not last. What exactly happened we do not know, but Mr. Quennell fills the vagueness of our knowledge with a sentence which is deadly in its precision, a sentence that describes not only Sterne but how much of human nature: "Their desires can scarcely have coincided, through the mazes of self-interest they gradually wandered apart."

We esteem a biographer for the felicity of his judgment, on such small disturbing incidents in a subject's life. In the greater judgments we are ready to risk an error; we may all be mistaken on the big questions. But here again, we admire the mind that can refuse an impressive theory and apply the corrective of the evidence. I am referring to the excellent discussion of Sterne's use of detail. Taine was maddened by this almost more than he was by Sterne's lack of taste and morals; and the theory of the fear of death has been advanced to explain that mad eye of Sterne's which was obliged to put down the smallest thing it saw. The spectacle of the skeleton clergyman on his scraggy nag, with a leer on his face and his eyes avidly rummaging the world as he bolts from the ever-pursuing spectre of death, is not one that the novelist-biographer finds easy to resist; but Mr. Quennell does resist it. After all, he says, Sterne was a painter as well as a writer; might he not have been possessed simply of the visual gift?

Sterne, Wilkes, Boswell and Gibbon were men of original and revolutionary genius in their fields. They were men with a single aim. Each one thought out his particular problem afresh. Gibbon undermined the classical position, Sterne refused to accept a fixed centre in human beings, Boswell's curious realism—he did not hesitate to say it—altered the whole foundation of biography, Wilkes fought for Liberty almost in spite of himself. They chipped away at the classical foundation of the house that protected them. But they were fortunate in one respect: they were born at the top of a period—though surely the word Augustan, which Mr. Quennell uses, applies only to the age of Queen Anne and not to the later generation. But, Augustans or not, they flourish when a period achieves its style at last and when a generation is strong enough to preserve it. It is their assurance which gives them their power to be original and subversive. How long, one asks, does it take a class to reach that point of spiritual power, daring and equipoise? More than a century, the history of the Gibbons suggests.

V. S. PRITCHETT

*Four Portraits. By PETER QUENNELL. Collins. 12s. 6d.*

## ORIGINAL SIN

**The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness.** By REINHOLD NIEBUHR, D.D. *Nisbet.* 7s. 6d.

Dr. Niebuhr describes this book, in a sub-title, as a vindication of democracy and a critique of its traditional defenders. This is an excellent account of its objective. But it may also be described as an effort to remedy the inadequacy of progressive political theory by drawing upon the resources of Christian theology. By implication, therefore, it answers the question: "What has Christianity to contribute to the solution of the problems of social reconstruction?" This is undoubtedly one of the most important questions that face us, however much we might wish to avoid it. The triumph of the Orthodox Church in the Soviet Union shows this. So does the power of

the Roman Church in the field of international affairs. The traditional answer of democrats is: "Nothing very specific; at most an inspiration to effort; a motive for progressive action; an emotional support for the ideals of freedom, equality and brotherhood, which are available only to the devout believer." Marxist theory, on the other hand, answers more seriously: "Nothing at all except obstruction to any realistic effort." Niebuhr answers: "The doctrine of original sin."

His thesis is a simple one, though it is expounded with all the resources of a vigorous personality and a wide erudition, in language which is sometimes unnecessarily obscure. The Christian doctrine of original sin, he insists, expresses a deep and essential insight into human nature and into the conditions of human progress. By neglecting or discarding it, the social idealists, from the liberal Christians to the Communists, fall victims to a stupid optimism, and consistently underestimate the difficulty of their task and the obstacles to success. The major obstacle is human self-interest. The children of light see this, of course; but they see it as a local or temporary disability. They see it in their opponents; they regard it as the effect of external and removable conditions. They fail to see it as a general and pervasive character of all human motives. In particular they fail to see it in themselves and on their own side. So their theories are Utopian and their plans and policies are superficial and simple-minded. Even the Communists, for all their boasted realism, are Utopian in their estimate of human motives on the other side of the revolution. They trust power too easily so long as it is in their own hands. They fail to understand that power—even legitimate and necessary power in a just organisation of society—corrupts its holders. So either they fail and relapse into despair, or they succeed and find that they have generated a new tyranny. The children of darkness are in no danger of falling into this trap. Self-interested themselves, they recognise self-interest everywhere and know how to use the self-interest of others, even the self-interest of the idealists, to serve their private ends. As the Gospel says, "The children of this world are, in their generation, wiser than the children of light."

In this Christian insight Niebuhr finds the ultimate justification of democracy. It supplies the ground for demanding that no human instrument of social power must be immune from criticism. It fosters the habit of self-criticism and that willingness to submit to criticism by others which are the safeguards against fanaticism and intolerance, and the incentives to discussion and compromise. Without it the well-meaning but simple-minded idealists are in danger of losing democracy in their efforts to extend it. This, too, is the explanation of the difficulty of securing and maintaining democracy as a form of government, and why the price of freedom is eternal vigilance.

Niebuhr applies his thesis not only to the critique of traditional theories, but also to the positive analysis of some of the central issues of the immediate future—the relation of the individual and the community, the question of property, the problem of toleration, the idea of a world community. His criticism is shrewd and penetrating. His positive suggestions are both forceful and sagacious. The book undoubtedly deserves careful reading by all who take the shaping of the future seriously. And yet—there is something wrong. The total effect is negative and discouraging. It leaves one feeling that the important thing is to be very, very careful and not to expect too much.

The reason for this may well be that Niebuhr remains too much at the level of pure theory. His criticism of the children of light is a criticism of their *theories*. As pure theory these are undoubtedly open to most of Niebuhr's criticisms. It does not follow that they were inadequate for their practical purpose, or even that in practice they misled their authors into Utopian expectations and futility. The Levellers may have been the only party of their day who really believed in toleration, yet it was Cromwell who had to plead with them and their like to consider the possibility that they might not be infallible. Judged by their theories, the Utilitarians may have been stupidly optimistic about human nature, yet they were the people who did most to extend and encourage the habits of toleration, discussion and compromise which Niebuhr rightly considers the essential basis of practical democracy. Every theory is a simplification. A practical theory is a simplification relevant to a particular purpose in particular circumstances. For the purposes of action it must be stripped of all immediate irrelevancies. To judge it without reference to the work in hand is to misjudge it. Make it adequate as a general theory and it will almost certainly become useless in practice, and sometimes dangerous.

It is precisely this academic preoccupation with the theoretical as a world in itself, this "pure spirituality," that led Marx to reject religion altogether and to castigate it as Utopian idealism. Niebuhr does not seem to have understood the meaning of Marx's doctrine of the unity of theory and practice. The early Christians could afford to stress original sin because they had a superb confidence that they knew the antidote. Without this, a doctrine of human depravity is a doctrine of despair. Surely Christianity has something more to offer than this. After all, we can get the doctrine of original sin from Freud, and the idea of a gradual approximation to an ideal society that can never be reached on earth is the burden of Hegelian philosophy.

JOHN MACMURRAY

## LUTHER AND NIEMÖLLER

**Martin Luther.** By PETER F. WIENER. *Hutchinson.* 2s. 6d.

I always thought Luther detestable—a violent, cruel, fanatical, toadying and hypocritical monk. Mr. Wiener's book more than bears out this diagnosis. He admits that Luther also did and said much that was fine, but he would be still more convincing if he gave illustrations of this more decent side of his victim. As it stands, however, his book convicts Luther of every Nazi crime—of contempt for truth, justice, mercy and tolerance, of personal bestiality, of virulent anti-semitism, of hysterical sadism to the peasants whose cause he had championed, of State-worship and the lust for power at any cost. Nothing could be more effective than the contrast between the refined and idealised portrait by Cranach and the "aggressive vulgarity" of the actual death-mask of the Reformer.

Mr. Wiener proceeds to argue that Luther's qualities have always dominated the Lutheran Church and, by quotations from Niemöller's biographer, to suggest that the leader of the Lutheran Church to-day is not only a nationalist who happened to quarrel with Hitler, but also a worthy follower of this loathsome Luther. He makes an odd, but significant error in quoting against Niemöller the statement that in opposing Hitler he was "not driven by care for our Church, but much more by care for the Third Reich." This, I take it, is no more than any patriot would say when appealing for public support in a struggle with a dictator in Germany or any other country. But Mr. Wiener produces other less pleasant quotations which show Niemöller as an enthusiastic supporter of Hitler from the beginning and, as a U-Boat Commander in the last war, doing his best to prevent shipwrecked sailors from being picked up by British destroyers. The Bishop of Chichester, who builds so much on Niemöller and the Lutherans, has an awkward case to answer.

Like Lord Vansittart, Mr. Wiener knows well enough that there are many civilised Germans, and he cannot deny that hundreds of thousands of Germans gave their lives in resisting Nazism. But he is so anxious that we should not rely on such Germans that he ridicules anyone who emphasises their importance. By so doing he leaves himself completely bankrupt about post-war Germany. Vansittart has increasingly discovered, I think, the weakness of his own propaganda. Instead of strengthening the argument for a tough peace, lumping all Germans together encourages British Conservatives to fraternise with just those elements whom Vansittart very honestly admits are the most dangerous. In all this controversy the more thoughtful of the opponents of Vansittart have agreed with him that to liquidate Nazism means also to get rid of the Junker and military caste and the industrialists who supported Hitler. The point at issue, now I think conceded by Vansittart, but not, as far as I've seen, appreciated by Mr. Wiener, is that the rider to this proposition is that we must discriminate between these military and Nazi elements and the ordinary population. Indiscriminate Hun-baiting produces just that Flensburg-fraternisation which is disastrous and the state of mind which led the Allies to abort the working-class revolution in 1918 and which seems still prevalent in some Allied circles in 1945. KINGSLEY MARTIN

## FAMILY PHOTOGRAPHS

**The Album.** By HORACE HORSNELL. *Hamish Hamilton.* 6s.

"Nothing now is left remarkable, except the flatness of the world; curiosity has destroyed whatever is curious, and invention has overtaken invention until we are fatigued by wonders and retreat into the unfathomably familiar." So wrote John Freeman, eighteen years ago, in an essay on H. M. Tomlinson. This might well have been in Mr. Horsnell's mind when he set out to examine his family photograph album. All who like good writing, care in choice of words, with economy and freedom from *clichés*, minutely accurate descriptions and tenderness towards things and people that are past, will enjoy and be spiritually refreshed by the book. The writing is delicate and personal. A very great number of people whose emotions and minds are excoriated by the present constant impact of horror and evil will return with delight in its pages to a lost world of peace and domesticity. Mr. Horsnell opens his book and the family photograph album which he has inherited at the same time.

"Padded, gilt-edged and brass-clamped, this solid volume is as like a mausoleum as a book may be. Its leaves have a marmoreal weight and rigidity, and clatter as one turns them. The turning, too, is a kind of serial exhumation that chastens while it charms." The author's soft spot is evidently for his mother, and next to her for her sister, Aunt Ruth. Here is a typical passage, descriptive of one of Mr. Horsnell's boyhood's acquaintances:

> He was perhaps less dull than blankly uncompanionable, impenetrably smug, and my first sheer Philistine. Is it Little Lord Fauntleroy, or merely some tendentious figure from one of Cousin Caroline's Christmas volumes that he recalls? He wore (at least I think he did) velvet and lace, button boots, and a wide-brimmed sailor hat. He had, if that were possible, less humour than Sutton, was garishly handsome, and could play scales on the piano as well as sing them. Just before our first official meeting he had been shorn of five fat, golden sausage-curls that gave him, or rather the photograph his mother treasured, a dreadful resemblance to a child Cavalier. This photograph was taken just before he was shorn, to memorialise the shearing, and showed him in full Fauntleroy regalia.

I have referred to Mr. Horsnell's emotional preoccupation with his mother and his mother's sister. "Cousin Caroline" plays a very different part. Aunt Ruth was a candid critic of other people's foibles. Her opinion of the dubious liaison between Cousin Caroline's faith and works, though possibly more outspoken than just, covered also some mannerisms her cousin developed as she grew older. These included a gratuitous, swift, dry sniff that might have expressed anything from scepticism to contempt; the habit (surviving from their mutual youth) of addressing Aunt Ruth as "Ruthie," which she

detested; a rampant curiosity concerning the means, social status and domestic arrangements of persons with whom she had merely a hearsay, and therefore vicarious, acquaintance; and a fantastically snobbish pride in the imaginary grandeur of her own friends and unilateral connections, of whom she never tired of talking. As Aunt Ruth once put it: "I've no patience with the fool. She's worse than underbred royalty!"

No one who has read Mr. Horsnell's previous books will be surprised by the eighteenth-century grace of *The Album*. In most of his earlier books, however, such as *The Bankrupt*, there has been evident to his friends a definite though concealed autobiographical undercurrent. In *The Album* there is no concealment. When the author means "I," he says "I." There is, of course, his characteristic reticence, an absence of crude frankness and an unwillingness to say unpleasant things about undesirable people. His style reminds one at times of that of Walter Pater, whilst the substance of some of his chapters makes one wonder for a moment if one is reading Stella Gibbons' *Cold Comfort Farm* or Mary Lamb's contributions to *Mrs. Leicester's School*. Yet, as Mr. Wells said of an earlier book of Mr. Horsnell's, his writing "is not simply a question of skill, but a combination of skill and instinct that does the trick."

For readers who like the books they read to have a moral, this is the moral of *The Album*. "The dead may tell few tales, but only because they lack attentive listeners. Should they gain a sympathetic ear, like the Ancient Mariner, they do not readily hold their peace. The tales they tell are not always expected or desired." When we older people are in the presence of our youthful relations or other contemporaries, there may among them be an "H. H." taking mental notes, which, transferred to reminiscent writing, may constitute our only lasting memorial.

HARRY ROBERTS

## SUN GLASSES

**The Sun in The Sands.** By HENRY WILLIAMSON. *Faber.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Autobiography is perhaps the most fragile of the literary arts; it is memory made lucid and consequent through detachment, made vivid by the force of the experiences themselves. Fiction is a coloured, high-lit version of life, autobiography a smaller, subtler, more pointed one. A writer must choose which experiences he intends to use in a novel, and which in his autobiography—the same will rarely do for both. For instance the personalities in autobiography, as opposed to the characters in fiction, need only be universal stock figures whom we shall accept as real, however eccentric they may be. They need not be scrupulously examined as in a novel. Mr. Williamson in this volume introduces one such figure, the grotesque tippler Porky, who is entirely convincing. But most of *The Sun in the Sands* is too enthusiastic to be successful. It is a record of youth; its themes are the author's first loves, his first novel; being turned out of home by his father; his cottage in Devonshire and occasional visits to London and the literary society of the early Twenties. A writer cannot get full value from the past if he projects himself too completely into it, if he discards the qualifying sense of perspective that he has learnt meanwhile. That is Mr. Williamson's difficulty—it is too faithful a story, too much statement and too little suggestion and no pattern of time running through it. Seen over years, an emotion which once seemed enormous may turn out to have been unimportant. The skill of the autobiographer lies in the selection of these events, of which the most trivial may hold the clue to an atmosphere.

Mr. Williamson's prose was spoilt for me by disconcerting devices. His nature-descriptions seem merely excuses for long, reiterative passages of prose. In common with many less reputable writers, he works a sort of confidence trick presumably calculated to impress the subscription-library readers. He builds up some obviously incidental personalities without giving them a name. This usually takes about a paragraph, and then the name is revealed like a rabbit—Mary Webb, Colonel Lawrence, and so on.

His mastery of tempo is a surprising characteristic in such an instinctive writer:

> It was the fox. It stood motionless. One forefoot was advanced. Its fangs were bared. Its eyes gleamed. Only its brush lifted gently, as though with pleasure. No hound was nearer than three yards. It stood between huntsman and whip, facing south. I watched for a minute, for two minutes. The fox never moved; the snarl was fixed; it stared straight ahead. Gently, very gently, the upper hairs of the muddy brush lifted and fell with the wind.
>
> "If only I had a camera," said a voice.

The last sections of the book are about a holiday in the Pyrenees. They are quite different from the rest. The author goes on a strange, exultant journey over an almost unknown pass in the mountains to see a family whose daughter he is in love with. He has a rather off-hand reception from them and from her, and is about to start on his way home in a mood of anti-climax when he hears that the other girl in the book, Barleybright, "the truth of the gentian," has followed him over the mountains and been killed on the pass. It is a stylised, fictional passage. One feels that the whole symbolism was too powerful for him to resist, as if it were the theme of some primitive ballad. The reader has strayed into the end of a persuasively bad novel.

So he returns to Paris:

> Bevan lent me five hundred francs, and I went to Amiens, thence to Albert, and walked over the old battlefields I had known on the Somme, with aching heart for all things remembered in ancient sunlight, but with hope for the future.

Suddenly, after all this enthusiasm, reticence and almost enigma. A strange ending, as if he were tired after so much excitement.

ANTONY BROWN

## THE EARTHWORM

**Darwin On Humus and the Earthworm.** With an introduction by SIR ALBERT HOWARD. *Faber.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Few creatures have played so important a part in the history of the world as the earthworm. It ploughed our land for us long before man ever thought of a cultivating implement, and we depend upon it to turn over our subsoil to-day. A weight of ten tons of dry earth will annually pass through the delicate bodies of these creatures and be brought to the surface on a single acre of land. Without earthworms, man would probably starve. They work for us, turning vegetable matter into life-giving humus, and, when they die, they rapidly give back to the soil nitrogen from their bodies to feed the plants. They level out inequalities to create the smooth, turf-covered expanses we so much admire. They over-turn, by undermining, such mighty monuments as the monoliths of Stonehenge; but, having over-turned them, they cover them with a protecting blanket of soil, preserving them for future archæologists to study.

Charles Darwin first wrote of all this in 1881, in his famous essay on *The Formation of Vegetable Mould*. Why should it be reprinted at this particular moment? Sir Albert Howard, chief protagonist of the "Organic" school of thought as against the believers in artificial fertilisers, explains this in his introduction. When Charles Darwin's essay appeared, the ideas of Liebig and


*Editions Poetry London*

**VIRGINIA WOOLF**
David Daiches
7/6 net

**NEW LYRICAL BALLADS**
*edited by*
Maurice Carpenter
Honor Arundel
Jack Lindsay
4/6 net

**HAMPDENS GOING OVER**
Herbert Corby
4/6 net

**FAREWELL AND WELCOME**
Ronald Bottrall
7/6 net

NICHOLSON & WATSON

*Thinker's Library*

**THE CHURCH AND SOCIAL PROGRESS**
AN HISTORICAL STUDY
by
**MARJORIE BOWEN**

A vivid historical study revealing how, through the centuries, the Church has proved the faithful ally of social and cultural reaction.

**2*s.* 6*d.* net**

C. A. WATTS & CO. LTD.
5 & 6, Johnson's Ct., Fleet Street, E.C.4

★
*reprinting*
**STALIN**
*by*
**J. T. MURPHY**

The only complete and up-to-date biography

*15s. net*

THE BODLEY HEAD

*The Evolution of Modern Italy*
*1715—1920*
By A. J. WHYTE
*Second Edition* 18*s. net*

"Eminently successful. To compress within a little over 250 pages the salient features of two centuries of Italian history is only possible to a writer possessed of great learning and gifted with the faculty of lucid exegesis."
—*The Times Literary Supplement*

*Alfred Williams*
By LEONARD CLARK
*Second Edition* 17*s.* 6*d. net*

"It is an entrancing and exciting book—a revelation of triumphal achievement, crowned by self-sacrifice in the face of tremendous obstacles."
—*Dr. Albert Mansbridge, C.H.*

**Basil Blackwell**

the traditions of Rothamsted were at their zenith and had directed public attention to the chemical aspects of the soil. In excessive concentration upon this, the biological nature of the soil tended to be overlooked, and to this day we put the importance of the teeming life of the countless organisms in the soil beneath our feet a bad second to the chemical approach to the subject.

Sir Albert's introduction points out how grave a mistake we may be making in this, and recounts experiments here and in America that demonstrate the essential part the earthworm plays in creating soil conditions in which healthy plants can live. On their health, he contends, depends the health of the animals that eat them and ultimately of ourselves. He endeavours to show how badly earthworms and artificial fertilisers go together.

This is contentious material, likely to inflame passions already aroused by this modern battle of the fields. But whether one takes sides or ignores this somewhat specialised contest, no layman could fail to read the calm, clear record of Darwin's studies of these lowly creatures, without being fascinated by their story. We all know them; but how many of us know anything about them? Yet they could make or unmake the fertility of a continent.

L. F. EASTERBROOK

## ELECTION BOOKS

**Pilot Guide to the General Election.** Edited by CHARLES MADGE. *Pilot Press.* 4*s.*

**The Left was Never Right.** By QUINTIN HOGG. *Faber.* 4*s.* 6*d.*

**Your Alternative Government.** By "TALUS." *Eyre and Spottiswoode.* 2*s.* 6*d.*

**Can the Tories Win the Peace?** By "DIPLOMATICUS" (K. ZILLIACUS). *Gollancz.* 2*s.* 6*d.*

**Vote Labour—Why?** By LICINNIUS. *Gollancz.* 2*s.* 6*d.*

The admirable essays in the Pilot Guide make a sober introduction to the last salvoes in the Roman War. Directed in the main to the under-thirties, for whom general elections are a political novelty, they are simple explanations of the procedure and issues of the coming contest. First principles of the franchise and party organisation are dealt with as fairly as the summaries of the various party declarations on foreign affairs, employment and other domestic questions. Since we do little to educate our citizens in elementary political rights and duties, this book does a good deal to fill the gap. Its sincere attempt to be impartial, however, tends to make party differences seem rather anæmic.

In advertising the latest additions to his yellow books, Mr. Gollancz shrewdly advised his readers to purchase the two Tory replies. His reason for this is clear after reading Mr. Hogg's elaborate analysis of Labour policy in the between-war years. This is a clever book, but the picture it draws of European politics is such a travesty that no meaning emerges unless it is read in conjunction with some other account of the same period. Inflamed by the charges of *Your M.P.* and its companion volumes, Mr. Hogg reverses them and lays the responsibility for our unpreparedness and the necessity of appeasement on the pacifism of the Labour Party. To prop up his argument—which remains defensive throughout—he has collected dozens of quotations from Labour speeches since 1920. Since for him, apparently, Germany has remained the enemy for the whole time, he does not need to examine Labour statements with any scrupulous concern for the general policy of which they were a part. His sole purpose is to produce some kind of evidence that at some time some Labour leaders were opposed to rearmament. But he never meets the point, raised at the time by the Left: Arms for what? That was the crucial question. And to ignore the politics of the discussion and make it purely a debate for or against armaments in general is the most sterile form of polemic. Mr. Hogg's attempt to explain the failure of the National Government adequately to re-arm in terms of Labour's "pacifism," though it had a large enough majority to do anything it wished without paying any attention to Labour, asks too much of our credulity. It boils down to the suggestion that Mr. Churchill represented the soul of the Tory Party, though Mr. Baldwin controlled the serried ranks of its back-benchers. From his book one would hardly guess that it was the Tories who kept Churchill in the wilderness. Of Churchill's exposure of German rearmament he says it

> was, no doubt, a grave indictment of Baldwinism, but it is a complete defence of the Tory Party.

A war against the Nazis over the Sudetenland

> would not have had a very obvious democratic aim . . . the Right believed the Left would involve the country in war on a questionable moral issue.

It is worth noting that Mr. Hogg is able to make his defence presentable only by coming forward himself as a critic of his party's policies.

The pamphlet by Mr. Zilliacus gives the other part of the story. It is a summary of his larger book, *The Mirror of the Past,* which analysed the record of Tory foreign policy after Versailles, with additional material on disarmament, collective security and the League, the Spanish War and Munich. In so far as the election will be fought over recriminations about pre-war policy, this able booklet and that by Mr. Hogg present the two sides of the case. Whether they present the whole truth is a different matter.

The anonymous author of *Your Alternative Government* follows a similar line of argument to Mr. Hogg, though he obviously writes for a more popular audience. His main debating trick—the book is written in the guise of reports from a Nazi agent in Britain to Hitler—will strike most people as simply stupid. *Vote Labour—Why?* is a series of rather uninspired answers to citizens of all walks of life who want to know how they should vote. Though the arguments and facts are sound, they are presented in a jargon which will not interest many of those to whom they are addressed.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS, 3*s.* per line (average 6 words) per insertion. Box numbers 1*s.* extra. Prepayment essential. Press Tuesday, early insertion not guaranteed.

**A POSTAL SUBSCRIPTION** to any address in the world costs: Yearly, 32*s.* 6*d.* Six months, 16*s.* 3*d.* Three months, 8*s.* 6*d.* Only overseas subscriptions accepted at present, to start as soon as copies are available.

**NEW STATESMAN AND NATION,**
10, Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1 *Hol.* 3216.

## Week-end Competitions

### No. 802

**Set by Sam Smiles**

Six guineas are offered for explanations by Jupiter of why he has taken to rationing summer weather as rigorously as the Government rations food and clothes. The explanation to be in eight rhymed couplets. Entries by June 19.

### RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 799

**Set by Roger Marvell**

Six guineas are offered for the best verses in the style of Milton, Matthew Arnold or Hopkins celebrating the reappearance in Piccadilly Circus of the Eros so inappropriately dedicated to the memory of Lord Shaftesbury. Not more than twenty lines.

**Report by Roger Marvell**

Hopkins was much the most popular model, and the skill with which competitors imitated him astonished me and has made judging very difficult. Ronald Mason, T. Melican, R. J. P. Hewison and Alan Russell strike me as a shade happier than H. F. Sattey, Silvia Tatham, Mary Edwards, Stanley J. Sharpless, Constance Sewell and William Bliss. The Arnold entries were mostly too closely modelled on particular stanzas of the original (" Come for they call you, Eros, from the plain," etc.), and even L. E. J.'s

WILLS'S
"THREE CASTLES"
CIGARETTES

20 for 2/8

"There's no sweeter tobacco comes from Virginia and no better brand than the 'Three Castles'"
W. M. Thackeray, 'The Virginians'

Issued by The Imperial Tobacco Company (of Great Britain and Ireland), Ltd. TT213T

1½D
Including Purchase Tax

You haven't experienced the luxury of the perfect shave unless you've used a Laurel—made from Sheffield's finest steel by Sheffielders in the home of the cutting edge.

*The Good-tempered Sheffield Blade*

LAUREL

*Made by George Lawrence Ltd., of Sheffield.*

CVS-21

OVER 50,000 ex-Prisoners of War

On the airfields of Belgium, Church Army Mobile Canteens have welcomed from Germany and sent off to England more than 50,000 British and Allied ex-Prisoners of War as well as returning Slave Workers.

Free tea, biscuits, cigarettes and matches have been given without stint in your name and the name of the Church.

For many prisoners the gallant Mobile Canteen operators are the first English ladies these men have seen in years.

There is a part for you to play in this great and satisfying task.

*Cheques, etc., should be made payable to the Church Army, crossed "Barclays, a/c Church Army," and sent to the Rev. H. H. TREACHER, General Secretary and Head,*

CHURCH ARMY
FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT

*Headquarters:*
55, Bryanston Street, London, W.1
*(Registered under the War Charities Act, 1940)*
10/188

## Company Meeting

### FRIENDS' PROVIDENT AND CENTURY LIFE OFFICE

THE annual general meeting of the Friends' Provident and Century Life Office was held on June 6th in London.

New life assurances were some £38,000 less than in 1943, but the total of £2,110,000 was satisfactory. The life premiums amounted to £848,000.

The trading of the fire, accident and general, and marine accounts enabled £31,253 to be transferred.

As the profits for 1944 appearing in the Century Consolidated Profit and Loss Account amount to £193,743, it has been decided, besides declaring the dividend of £90,000, to pay a bonus of £60,000, which will enable £38,743 to be added to the free balance carried forward, as well as adding £5,000 to the additional reserve in the Accident and General Account.

The aggregate funds of the group amounted to £23,670,858.

The present valuations, while nominally they relate to the past five years, take into account the happenings of the 10 years 1935-1944. The profit earned by the Friends' Provident in the 10 years was £1,388,190, but this is somewhat of an under-statement, as the strengthening of the valuation basis, by assuming in effect 2½ per cent. for life assurances instead of 3 per cent. at the 1934 valuation, has increased the reserves by £295,000. The total surplus may therefore be stated to have been £1,683,000, of which £705,000 has been distributed as bonus, £478,000 applied to strengthen the valuation bases or added to the surplus carried forward, and the sum of £500,000 applied to set up a visible general reserve in the balance-sheet.

entry suffers, I consider, from echoing a little too closely *Empedocles on Etna*. I. M. A. B.'s Milton seems to me excellent. My remark about the unsuitability of this monument to the great Evangelical was intended only as a hint, and I did not require competitors to follow it. I award a guinea for each entry printed below.

### EROS REDUX

Return, O Eros! the dred *Bhtts* is past
When the wing'd Air was loud with hideous Humm
Of hostile Squadrons what time *Themmes*, aghast,
Mirrour'd the flame-rackt Towne; the guns are dumb:
No griesly *Aëreal* engin now shall fall,
No sudden shreike of Warning shall appall
Nor *Stygian* gloom decree perpetual Night.

Now *Maie* returns with Retinue of flowres,
Haste thee, immortal Boy;
Fleet son of bright *Phallommeda*, O come!
Return to deck the *Circuss* for our Joy,
Persuade th' *Olympian* Powers
Once more to set thee, poised as if for flight,
A-top the good Earl's argent-dropping Showres;
Bid *Flowre-girls* gather round thy Pedestall
And Bid them thither bring
Panniers of Fragrance in a thousand hues:
Debonair god of *Dalliance* and delight
Return in Youth and Joy to bid Men use
In fellon *War* no more thir sojourning.

I. M. A. B.

### THE RETURN OF EROS

Where the house-cliffs encircle
The new-springing light
Flashing amber and ruby,
Out-starring the Night,

Where the underground pilgrims
Surge up to the street—
What form is alighting,
Moon-silvered and fleet?

From what Air-borne Division
An Archer divine
Falls, bearing on shoulder
The Cyprian sign?

'Tis Eros comes flying
To bring Men again
The heart-ache of Rapture,
The heart-ease of Pain.

'Tis Eros, forsaking
His Thespian grove,
To wound us with Passion,
To heal us with Love.

L. E. J.

### GREETING TO EROS

What! oh my winged boy-god, oh are you back then,
Returned from those, the silver-shelving, the god-frequented
Banks, backs, rare reaches of the tideless, fair
River, eternity we call? None wonder, sprite, none found to question when
Flew from us, from the sour spite, envious mouthed-beings demented
Of our tortured days, tear-bespread, all fear-begetting, care
In unceasing round, tank-tumults, sudden-flame flashing,
And the dragon's teeth brood, the armed, the mindless, the arising

Legions, friend-foe-falsity, from these flew, no more
Amidst, your form: oh where? Known in what calm
Otherness, your grace? There should be questionings beyond
Appearances, there should be (death quiet now) rejoicings for
The escape, oh brief wild grace returned, from harm:
And that death-in-hate, hating, yet not so, since over-fond
Of many nations, living in slime-shadow where he trod,
Must now, now go; (speak of it) for you are back, are back, boy, god!

TERENCE MELICAN

### THAT HUMAN LOVE CAN BE AN HARBINGER OF PEACE

Back he is O bound he banebeauteousest of boys
Back (left his sáke ever it?) winged wánton to the middle, hub, nub, ständswinging centre (long hid
Boardbagged plinth, pushpeach body further) and poising on flyaway pinions seem to flutter. Ah, joys!
Homer high heeling, thróngwräck to thrid,
Pounce on 's perch, peacefruit fraught, newsboy of rid
World of war's woundful worm. What! drugged with noise—
Eardinging grumble of groundbass—confounded,
Folk wander his fair fiéld (town's navel well-rounded,
Gold goblet in heap of set about with lilies wheat—
Cup inside venom'd lees lurk, grain with grub in to ground did
Fruitless fall all or much, had not Grace abounded)
Wring pleasure, bite sting, death, damnation, defeat.
And Flyer, fire, so fleet,
Dappledarling of lovequeen, mánlove's sign, symbol, mark,
Have béen archer of flesh; being come, love, dove to ark,
On manfriendship now embark,
Bringing peace, not ah! swórd: barbs, feathers and hafts bury:
Honour truly earl, earl-star, star-earl, great Earl of Shaftesbury.

R. J. P. HEWISON

None missed, mourned, then? What, barred of your wing-wet child's charm,
Of all those bluecoats, claycoats, not one wondered,
Wandering, nor Shaftesbury's hurled heard, whilst road-ruck thundered,
"Shame!"—nor at child's plight high heart leapt with alarm?
Five years board-shuttered, all-fence-fettered-alone there
Weep did you, work-forbid, war-forced into faint ease?
That rest what rust, waste of a marksman, with all these
Hearts to win, world-worn, to coax, comb of sour care.
Peer's waif, oh poor caged windpride, earthed your arrow—
Air!—yes, even of town-sky far fresher than vault-void:
This rain-rins'd, pigeon-puff'd, God's gift swallow and sparrow
Drink as of course: best air ever you enjoyed
We yield you at long last: see! now maid and man dance
May-step—vow to the Lord of all, lord's boy, your new chance!

ALAN RUSSELL

### THE RETURN OF EROS

Have hoisted, have in relieftime hoisted the god of love
(Bracemuscled remembrancer he of that good man
Whom, by God's love working, only by love-god's token our folk can
Take thought of) now long whiles dispossessed from above
By danger devilhatekindled; now, back with the Dove
To this circle-circus of men's yearning alights in the van
This (O must be *new* love-) true love-signet of God's plan,
Bowman uplifted, shifted to be no more by any remove.
Restored be again above crowdsurge bowplying
The God of (O not of sensual, beseech we, but spiritual rather)
Love, twanging from tension stringquivering the bright arrows,
Which welcome—O welcome them to our hearts flying
Home (arrows of love not lovers' love but love of the Father)
Havened at homeharbour through hell-hazard and nigh soulswallowing narrows!

RONALD MASON

## Company Meeting

## ODHAMS PRESS

THE twenty-fifth annual general meeting of Odhams Press, Ltd., was held on Monday, June 4th, at the Connaught Rooms, Great Queen Street, W.C.

The RT. HON. LORD SOUTHWOOD OF FERNHURST (chairman and managing director), in the course of his speech, said:—

The net profits for the year, after providing for debenture interest and other charges and for contingencies which may arise in the post-war period, amounted to £959,981, an increase of, approximately, £161,000 over the total for the previous year.

With regard to the balance-sheet, the general reserve now stands at £790,000. It is proposed to transfer to reserve out of the profits of the year a further £50,000. It will then amount to £840,000.

The reserve of £640,719 for taxation shows an increase of £136,546 over the previous year.

After provision has been made for the Preference dividends, taxation and other appropriations, there is an available balance of £266,350, and the directors recommend that this sum be dealt with in the manner set out in the report.

### GROWTH IN SALES

The trade and sundry debtors stand at £793,945—a substantial increase of £196,715 over the previous year.

Investments in Government securities at £762,005 shows an increase of £12,005 during the year. Tax reserve certificates in hand amount to £750,250, as compared with £230,373 last year. Cash at bank and in hand stands at £1,444,986.

The directors recommend a dividend on the Ordinary shares of 15 per cent. per annum.

The report was unanimously adopted and the conversion of the shares into stock was approved.


**Personal**

TO all Socialists. Common Wealth M.P.s have done good work for Socialism in the House of Commons. Help to send them back with a donation to Common Wealth Fighting Fund, 4, Gower Street, W.C.1.

HOLIDAYS or Leave? Join informal house parties, young professional and service people. Easy going, bathing, walking. Simple accom. June 23rd, Cornwall; July 21st, Scottish Highlands; additional Cornish parties, Aug., Sept. Full particulars from Box 8842.

GOOD home wanted for Bluthner upright. 5s. weekly rent. Box 8829.

HOLIDAY Suggestions. Let me plan an original holiday for you. Box 7707.

VOICE Production and Singing. Martin Attwater, Wigmore Hall Studios, W.1.

GERMAN convers. lessons; your home/mine, S.W.3. Progress assured. Box 8820.

SPANISH Lessons by Madrid grad. Write Sr. Macso, 34 Queen's Gardens, W.2.

DANISH conversation and lessons wanted, West or South-West London. Box 8791.

MUSARTS, Ltd., Agents for Plays, Film Rights, represent leading prog. Authors. Fresh, virile material offd. wtd. Dirs.: Herbert Marshall, P. Fishman. Manager, D. Martin, 48 Sth. Molton St., W.1. MAY. 8735.

TO Societies, Clubs or Social Organisations. We arrange intriguing demonstration-lectures on a fascinating psychological subject. Free of charge. Apply Regis Theatres, Princes House, 190 Piccadilly, W.1. Tel.: Reg. 5156.

SOLVE Life and General Insurance problems by consulting independent Brokers; policies effected with selected Companies; no charge for Brokerage. Hills & Co., 353 High Street, Cheltenham.

WOODEN Toys at moderate prices, for Nurseries and Schools. Very strong, bright glossy finish. 2½d. stp. for catalogue. Mountoys (Rehabilitation), Bishopstoke, Hants.

SPECIALLY Blended for sensitive palates—T.T.T. Magnums Cigarettes. From Whitmore & Bayley, 92, Wigmore St., W.1. Est. 1823. 100, 13s. 4d.; 500, 65s. 6d.; 1,000, 130s. Post free. Sample flat 50, 6s. 8d.

**Personal—continued**

LABOUR candidate urgently requires loan car for election campaign. Box 9332.

FOR sale, August, small private day school. High reputation. Attached mod. bungalow. Equipment incls. Montessori apparatus. Consider part exch. bungalow/hse. Box 8769.

COTTAGE, near coast. 2 and child, 2nd-half August, or any suggestions. Box 8762.

HAVE your favourite suit copied in a John Peel Countryside Tweed from £5 14s 0d. and 26 coupons. Fit guaranteed or money refunded. Send 3d. for patterns. Redmaynes, 10 Wigton, Cumberland.

MEMORIALS for Churchyard or Church, designed by well-known Sculptors for erection in any part. Sketch designs prepared free. Leaflet (2½d.) from Sec., Sculpture & Memorials, North Dean, High Wycombe.

PERFECT piano playing. "Master Study," rapid courses (beginners to advanced), Technique, Sight Reading, Memorising, Musicianship. Lit. (post 3d.) from Percy Fenn-Macklin, Dominion House, Bartholomew Close, E.C.1.

MONOMARK Service. Permanent London Address. Letters redirected. Confidential. 5s. p.a. Royal Patronage. Keytag 9d. Write Monomark BM/MONO12, W.C.1.

OUR fighting men in times of adversity, after Service, may count on the help of the British Legion. A legacy to Haig's Fund, Cardigan House, Richmond, Surrey, will benefit *all* ranks of *all* Services, their families, too.

DEVELOP Your Literary Talent with the London School of Journalism. Reduced fees. Personal tuition by correspondence. Free advice and book from Prospectus Office, L.S.J., 57 Gordon Sq., W.C.1. Mus. 4574.

GENERAL Election approaches. Read "Winston Churchill and Democracy," other articles appearing "In the Shadow of Big Ben," 4d., post free. R. Clifton, Ltd., 51, Eden St., Kingston-on-Thames.

10,000 Books on Yoga, Occultism, Psychology, Astrology, and other subjects. The Theosophical Library, 50 Gloucester Pl., London, W.1. Sub. 21s. p.a.; 7s. 3 months. Open 11–6. Postal Service a speciality.

**Personal—continued**

MODERN books wanted. J. Clarke Hall, Ltd., Wine Office Court, E.C.4.

BOOKS. New Catalogue No. 66 is ready. 932 items, including General Literature (English and Foreign), Natural History and Classics. Deighton Bell & Co., Ltd., 13 Trinity St., Cambridge.

WHEN bookshopping, the name to remember is The Ken Bookshop.

BERMALINE. The Bread we all enjoy. Ask your Baker.

**Where to Stay and Restaurants**

SPEND a restful holiday on the farm. Homely, recommended. Terms, 3½ gns. each. Ware, Rectory, Beaworthy, Devon.

BOARD resid., July 105s., Aug. 126s., Sept 105s. Oldstrow, The Lizard, Cornwall.

FRIENDLY country house, own horses, home produce, near sea and moors, excellent food. H. & C. in bedrooms. Major S. B. Sweet-Escott, Heddon Hall, Parracombe, N. Devon. Tel. Parracombe 86.

PAYING guests. Lovely Cotswold Vill., 3½ gns. week, chldrn., 2½ gns. Box 8830.

RAJAH Restaurant, 17 Irving St., Leicester Sq. Fully licensed, no House Charge. Best Indian Curries in London. Strict vegetarian dishes. English grills and teas. Open daily till 11 p.m. Abbey 4188.

**Typing, Literary and Translations**

TYPING and Duplicating by Experts. MSS., Plays, etc. Metropolitan Typewriting Office, 2 Glenhurst Avenue, London, N.W.5. CHA. 7839.

J.B. Typing Service. Speedy and accurate typing of all kinds of scripts; specialist in technical work. 12a, Grant House, Albion Avenue, S.W.8. MAC. 4857.

ETHELLE Typewriting and Duplicatingn Send for list. Now removed to 1 Hare Place, 47 Eiget St., E.C.4. Phone Central 2691.

WRITE for Profit. Send for free booklet. Regent Institute (191A), Palace Gate, W.8.

TECHNICAL translns. from into Russia, by expd. Russian engineer. Box 8784.